BBC

40-PAGE SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE

Your essential companion to the best events in the UK and beyond

music

The world's best-selling classical music magazine

BBC RADIO 3

Full May listings inside

See p140

150 YEARS

Vaughan Williams

The great composer's life and times reflected in ten masterpieces

Plus!

Mark Elder and **Antonio Pappano** on the art of conducting Vaughan Williams

The Pilgrim's Progress: The story behind an unloved opera

Also in this issue

A tribute to Sondheim

George Butterworth's A Shropshire Lad

Manchester Camerata

Iannis Xenakis

Julie Fowlis

and much more…

Vaughan Williams 150 YEARS

Vaughan Williams

Symphonies Nos 4 & 6

Plus In the Fen Country

BBC Philharmonic, John Wilson (conductor)

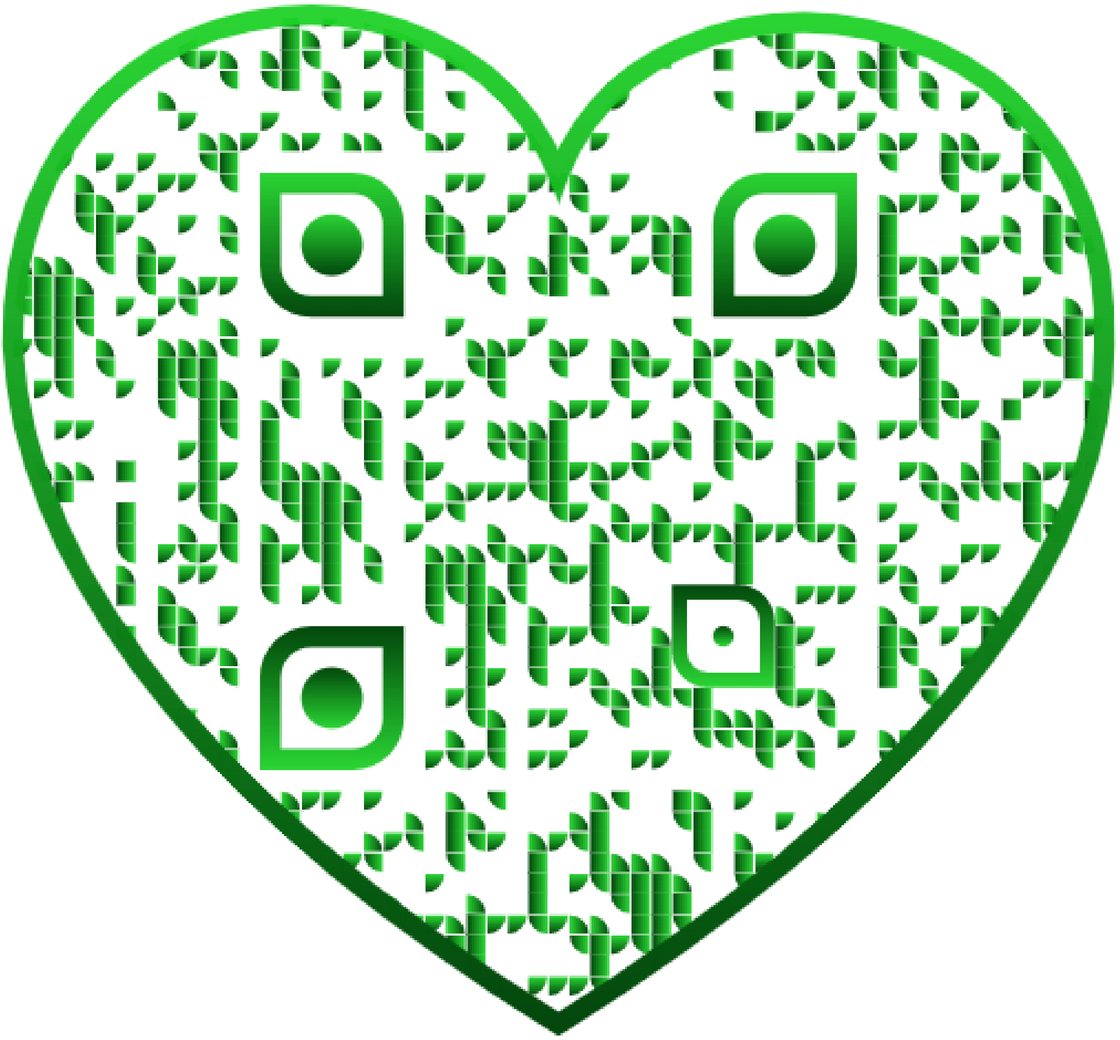
Every month, hear great artists perform complete works, including new and archive BBC recordings. If your CD is missing, please see your newsagent.

100 reviews by the world's finest critics

Recordings & books – see p108

9 770966 718172 05

MAY 2022 £6.50



Join us at the Fifteenth English Music Festival, in and around the magnificent mediaeval Abbey at Dorchester-on-Thames, for a thrilling weekend of music-making – from Roderick Williams singing Vaughan Williams and Howells, and the BBC Concert Orchestra playing world premières of works by Elgar and Delius alongside Coleridge-Taylor's gorgeous Violin Concerto, through song recitals, choral concerts and a rare performance of Holst's glorious *Cloud Messenger*, to intimate guitar music and a Noel Coward show.

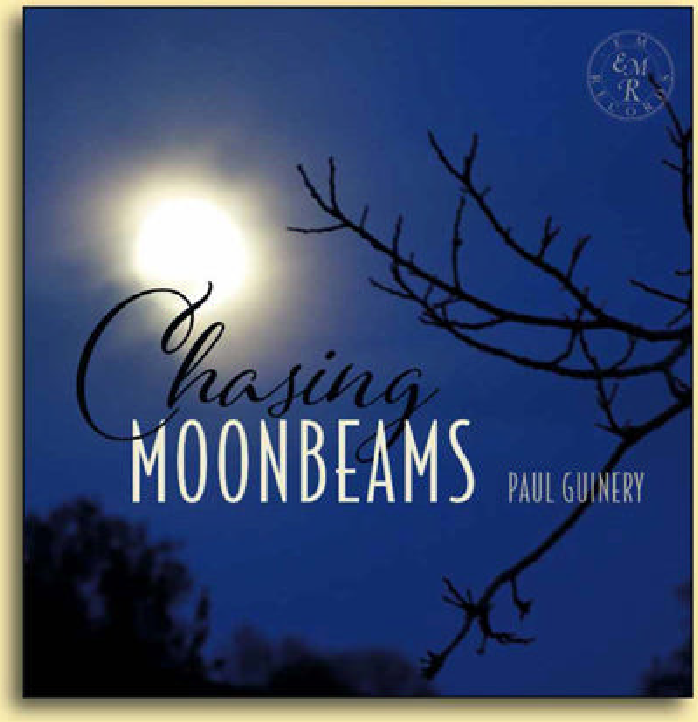
Book at www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2022-may-festival/box-office.php. For a postal booking form or further information please contact Festival Director Em Marshall-Luck at The English Music Festival, PO Box 123, Clunton, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 7BP or email em.marshall-luck@englishmusicfestival.org.uk.

27-29 MAY 2022

DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES, OXFORDSHIRE

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk

EM RECORDS

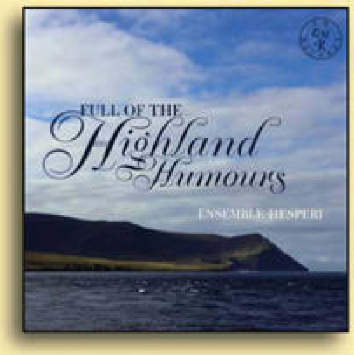


EMR CD077

CHASING MOONBEAMS

Light Music Classics by RICHARD ADDINSELL, MADELEINE DRING, REGINALD FORESYTHE, SIR EDWARD GERMAN, BILLY MAYERL, SHERMAN MYERS, IVOR NOVELLO, ROGER QUILTER, STANFORD ROBINSON, CYRIL SCOTT, IRIS TAYLOR and others

Paul Guinery (piano)



EMR CD074

FULL OF THE HIGHLAND HUMOURS

A collection of "Scots Tunes" by JAMES OSWALD, NICOLA MATTEIS, HENRY PLAYFORD, ROBERT BREMNER and others

Ensemble Hesperi

EMR CD065

THOSE BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS

Songs and song-cycles by GURNEY and HOWELLS

Roderick Williams (baritone)
Michael Dussek (piano)
The Bridge Quartet

Join us as a Foundation Subscriber to receive a free copy of each disc as soon as it is released, individual disc subscription benefits and a pair of free tickets to all recitals, launches, receptions, parties and events that EM Records organises.

Visit **www.em-records.com** for further details of subscription schemes, audio-clips and to purchase discs or contact Director **Em Marshall-Luck** at **em.marshall-luck@em-records.com** or on **07808 473889**.

EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES
Tel: +44 (0)117 300 8752
Email: music@classical-music.com
Post: The editor, BBC Music Magazine, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES
Tel: 03330 162 118
Web: buysubscriptions.com/contactus
Post: BBC Music Magazine, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF

Follow us on Twitter
@musicmagazine

Like us on Facebook
facebook.com/classicalmagazine

Find us online
classical-music.com

Subscribe to our podcast

Follow us on Instagram
@musicmagazinepics

Digital issues

BBC Music Magazine is available on iPad, Googleplay, Kindle Fire and Zinio. Download the digital edition today!

Welcome

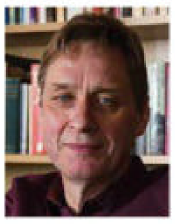
For many, Vaughan Williams is synonymous with an idealised version of bucolic Britain. The ubiquity of *The Lark Ascending* and the *Tallis Fantasia* has to some extent prevented the composer's myriad and varied other works from achieving similar levels of popularity – but this may well change in his 150th anniversary year, given the sheer number of RVW performances taking place in the UK and abroad.

It seems depressingly fitting that a musician profoundly affected by two world wars should be so celebrated just as conflict again threatens the integrity of Europe. For all his diversity and range, Vaughan Williams has always 'spoken' for Britain – and his compositions continue in many ways to encapsulate our collective sense of identity, even in a 21st century so far removed from the folk melodies woven throughout his musical language. Perhaps, then, in such troubling times, we need more than ever that deep sense of humanity that infuses his works.

On page 26, Stephen Johnson investigates RVW's spiritual journey through ten of the composer's key pieces, while on page 34 conductors Mark Elder and Antonio Pappano discuss the intricacies of conducting his symphonies. Then, on page 38, Geraint Lewis traces the development of RVW's opera *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a work that, undeservedly, has yet to capture wider attention.

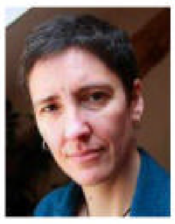
Charlotte Smith *Editor*

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



Stephen Johnson
Writer, composer and broadcaster
'This is good time to be thinking about Vaughan Williams, a man who witnessed the worst that human destructiveness can do, but who still found a way to affirm the human spirit.' ***Page 26***

James Inverne
Writer, editor and playwright
'My adoration of Sondheim has only grown over the years, not least after an unforgettable afternoon at his house once, featuring alcohol and reminiscences! It was a privilege to write a tribute to him.' ***Page 50***



Steph Power
Writer and composer
'It seems extraordinary that the unique Xenakis was born 100 years ago. I've long cherished his explosive music, but discovering more about the humanitarian polymath behind the sounds was wonderfully inspiring.' ***Page 100***

Visit **Classical-Music.com** for the very latest from the music world

Contents

MAY 2022

BBC RADIO 3
May Radio 3 and TV listings
See p140

FEATURES

26 **Cover:** Ralph Vaughan Williams
On the composer's 150th anniversary, *Stephen Johnson* explores his life, work and legacy via ten masterpieces

34 How to conduct Vaughan Williams
Mark Elder and Antonio Pappano discuss their art

38 The Pilgrim's Progress
Geraint Lewis celebrates VW's strangely unloved opera

46 Manchester Camerata
Jeremy Pound meets the the multi-talented ensemble as it prepares to light the candles for its 50th birthday

50 Stephen Sondheim – an appreciation
James Inverne salutes the composer and librettist

54 Music festivals special
It's that time again! Your 44-page guide to the very best summer festivals in the UK, Europe and beyond

EVERY MONTH

6 **Cover disc:** on your May CD
Vaughan Williams's Fourth and Sixth Symphonies, played by the BBC Philharmonic under John Wilson

8 Letters

12 The Full Score

25 Richard Morrison

42 The BBC Music Magazine Interview
The groundbreaking German horn player Felix Klieser shares the secret of his unique success with *Freya Parr*

98 Musical Destinations
We send *Claire Jackson* to Coventry, UK City of Culture

100 Composer of the Month
The inimitable genius of Xenakis, by *Steph Power*

104 Building a Library
Clare Stevens searches for the greatest recordings of George Butterworth's *Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad*

140 Radio & TV listings

144 Crossword and Quiz

146 Music that Changed Me
Folk musician Julie Fowlis

26 Ralph Vaughan Williams

COVER: GETTY THIS PAGE: GETTY, JEROME BONNET, JAMES CHEADLE, YASUO FUJII

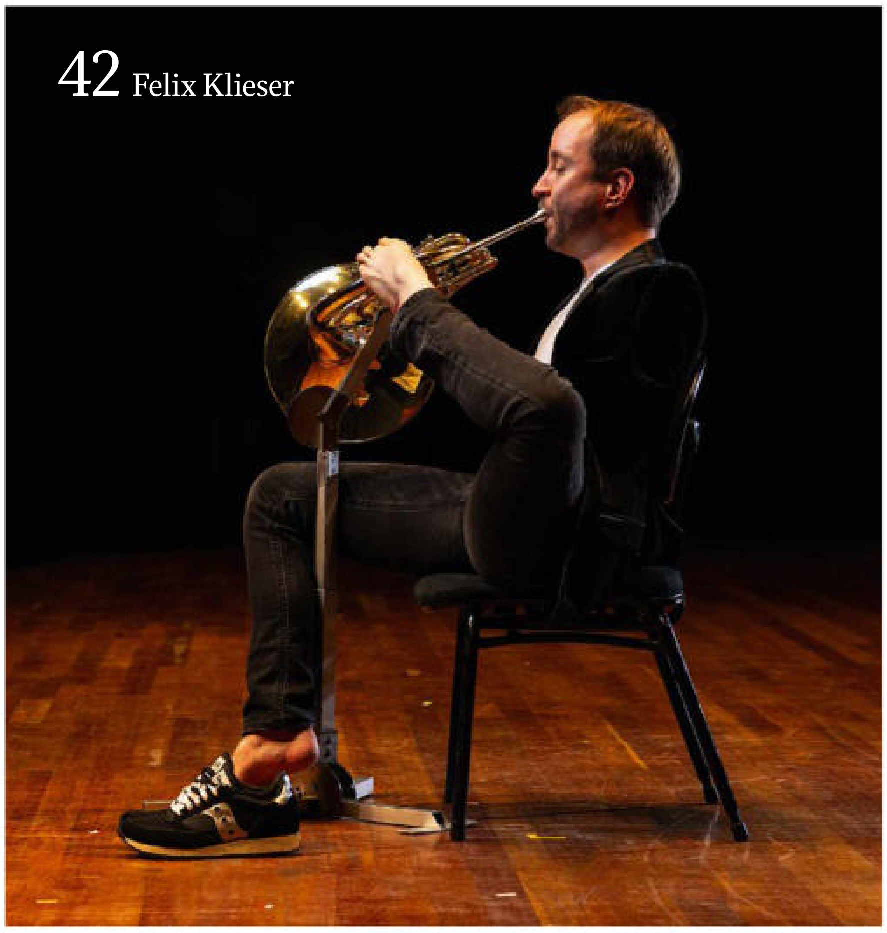
BBC music MAGAZINE

Subscriptions £64.87 (UK); £65 (Europe); £74 (Rest of World) ABC Reg No. 3122

EDITORIAL
Plus our favourite piece of music by Vaughan Williams
Editor Charlotte Smith
Symphony No. 5
Deputy editor Jeremy Pound
Mass in G minor
Reviews editor Michael Beek
Symphony No. 6
Digital editor & staff writer Freya Parr
Three Shakespeare Songs
Cover CD editor Alice Pearson
The Lark Ascending
Art editor Dav Ludford
Picture editor Sarah Kennett
Senior digital editor Debbie Graham
Listings editor Paul Riley
Fear no more the heat o' the sun
Thanks to
Daniel Jaffé, Jenny Price

MARKETING
Subscriptions director
Jacky Perales-Morris
Direct marketing manager Kellie Lane
Senior direct marketing executive
Joe Jones

ADVERTISING
Advertising sales director
Mark Reen +44 (0)117 300 8810
Group advertisement manager
Laura Jones +44 (0)117 300 8509
Business development manager
Katie Gibbons +44 (0)117 300 8812



42 Felix Klieser

54 Festivals 2022

Senior account manager
Rebecca Yirrell +44 (0)117 300 8811
Partnership manager
Rebecca O'Connell +44 (0)117 300 8814
Brand sales executives
Victoria Pointer +44 (0)117 300 8102
Jenny Allan +44 (0)117 300 8546
Inserts
Laurence Robertson +353 876 902208
SYNDICATION & LICENSING
Tim Hudson +44 (0)20 7150 5170
Richard Bentley +44 (0)20 7150 5168
PRODUCTION
Production director Sarah Powell
Production coordinator Katty Skardon
Ad coordinator Beth Phillips
Ad designer Parvin Sepehr
Reprographics Tony Hunt, Chris Sutch
PUBLISHING
Managing director Andrew Davies

CEO Tom Bureau
Group managing director
Andy Marshall
BBC STUDIOS, UK PUBLISHING
Chair, editorial review boards
Nicholas Brett
Managing director, consumer products and licensing
Stephen Davies
Director, magazines and consumer products Mandy Thwaites
Compliance manager Cameron McEwan
UK publishing co-ordinator
Eva Abramik
EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Jack Furness, Edward Blakeman, Chi-chi Nwanoku, Adam Barker, Philip Raperport

This magazine is published by Our Media Company Bristol Limited under licence from BBC Studios

May reviews

Your guide to the best new recordings and books

Fantastic Finn: Klaus Mäkelä proves a stunning Sibelian

108 Recording of the Month

Sibelius

Complete Symphonies

'Who'd have predicted that this Sibelius symphony cycle would be the most electrifying and often revelatory of all?'

110 Orchestral 113 Concerto 116 Opera
118 Choral & Song 122 Chamber 125 Instrumental
130 Brief Notes 132 Jazz 135 Books
136 Audio 137 Reviews Index

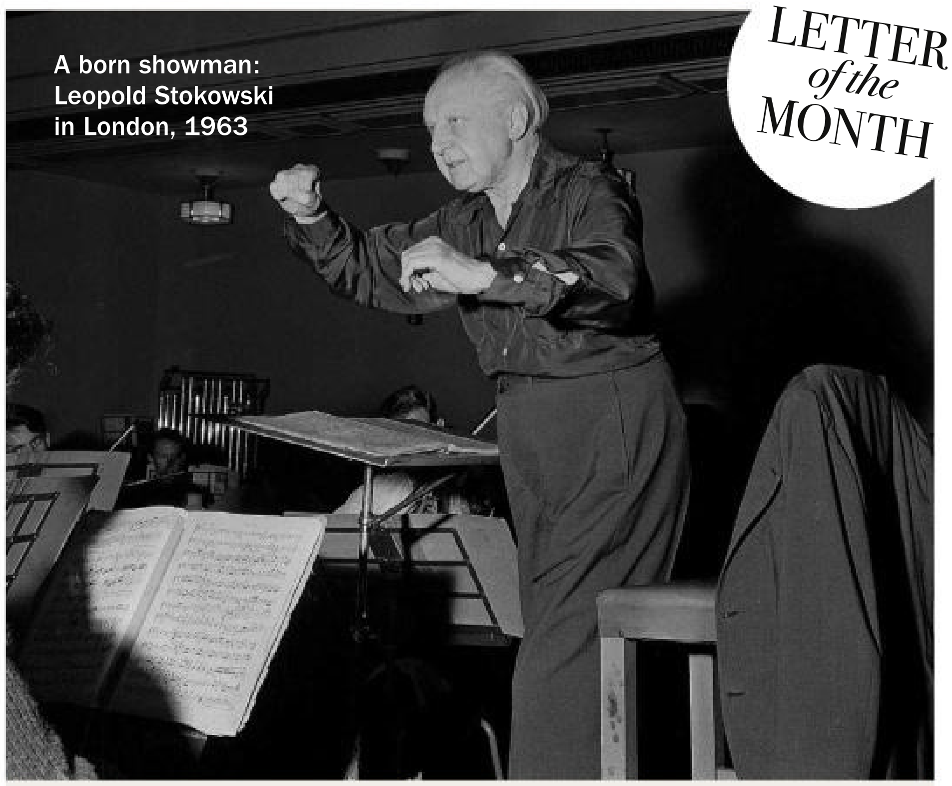
Subscribe today to BBC Music Magazine

Save money on newsstand prices!

See p10 for our fantastic offer

Have your say…

Write to: The editor, BBC Music Magazine, Eagle House, Bristol, BS1 4ST
Email: music@classical-music.com Social media: contact us on Facebook and Twitter



A born showman: Leopold Stokowski in London, 1963

LETTER of the MONTH

More of the same?

In response to Brian Wise's *A Little Extra* feature on the subject of encores (April issue), I think that the choice of encore is important as it has to promote the right mood following the main work. I believe that Sir Thomas Beecham got it absolutely right with his selection of 'lollipops', several of which I witnessed at the Royal Festival Hall in 1959/60, and in recent times the soloists performing with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra have often collaborated with members of the orchestra for an encore – a quite delightful practice. Not all encores are appropriate. When the LSO performed Mahler's 'Resurrection' Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall on 30 July 1963, conductor Leopold Stokowski responded to the audience's clamour by repeating the final part of the symphony. A combination of showmanship and bad taste, perhaps?
***Barry Bloxham,** Taunton*

WIN! £50 VOUCHER FOR PRESTO MUSIC

Every month we will award the best letter with a **£50 voucher** for **Presto Music**, the UK's leading e-commerce site for classical and jazz recordings, printed music, music books and musical instruments. Please note: the editor reserves the right to shorten letters for publication.

prestomusic

GETTY

A welcome addition

A carefully thought-out concert programme reaches its climax and is greeted by justified acclaim, only to be followed by an often trite, if popular, addition that totally deflates the mood. I would be more than happy if I never heard an encore again! But then I have to acknowledge an exception, and like Richard Morrison's example (Comment, April) it was given by an octogenarian pianist, though in my case it was Arthur Rubinstein at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. Back he came, again and again, delivering what was in effect Part III of his concert in a virtuoso display that entirely belied his years.
***Bruce Carlin,** Dewsbury*

The editor replies:
We have enjoyed reading your thoughts on the pros and cons of encores. Within the *BBC Music Magazine* editorial team, opinion is divided – as, judging from your correspondence, seems to be the case among readers too! We would love to hear further opinions.

Brucknerian balance

There is a quite simple answer to the perceived problem of the balance of movements in Bruckner's Seventh Symphony (Letters, April): simply play the *Scherzo* before the extended *Adagio*. Sir Colin Davis adopted this solution at a BBC Prom that I attended many years ago. It worked a treat, separating the two swiftest paced movements and placing the tragic *Adagio* where it belongs – immediately before the lighter, comparatively exuberant, finale. As Sir Colin might have observed, the way out is through the door!
***Peter Brennan,** Whitstable*

Find the maestro

During Covid lockdown, I have been researching the life of Handel and his *Messiah*. Terry Blain's *Timepiece* feature in April was a valuable addition to my collection of informative articles – I was so pleased to have confirmation that Handel caught a ferry from Holyhead, Anglesey to Dublin as many seem to think he travelled from Parkgate. The reason for my interest in Handel is that in my late father-in-law's copy of Novello's Original Octavo Edition of *Messiah* are 16 autographs of artists who took part in a performance of the oratorio in, we think, Grimsby in 1942 – the date, but not the venue, is confirmed by contralto Sara Buckley's autograph. Others who signed include Kathleen Ferrier and Peter Pears. Sadly missing is the top of one page, on which we think was the conductor's autograph. If any of your readers can confirm who conducted in Grimsby in 1942, it would be a most welcome piece of information.
***J Richard Williams,** Anglesey*

The editor replies:
If any readers can shed light on this, we would be very pleased to pass it on.

From Bard to verse

Following the recent correspondence regarding music for Shakespeare plays (Letters, March), it is evident that incidental music is not a natural preserve for the established composer (with a few notable exceptions). It necessarily occupies a subsidiary role, providing an aural element alongside the visual one in supporting the actors, and all under the supervision of a director. It therefore requires special collaborative skills. It obviously can and does provide a valuable stepping stone for young, dramatically inclined composers, however.

To take but one example from the 1960s and '70s, Christopher Whelen wrote incidental music for no fewer than 20 Shakespeare productions at the Old Vic, Stratford and Chichester theatres, and also for the BBC. He then went on to write innovative broadcast musico-dramatic works exploring the differing balances possible in combining words and music, including several radio operas and *Some Place of Darkness*, the first ever opera commissioned on a contemporary theme for BBC TV.
***Dennis Andrews,** Cumnor*

Walk the walk

I love Holst's music. After reading your great *A Walk with Holst* feature (March issue), I now love his music even more, and am determined to walk the Holst Way myself. Thank you, *BBC Music Magazine.*
***John Jowett,** via e-mail*

Gagging Gergiev

Valery Gergiev is a fine conductor and, quite independently, a friend of Vladimir Putin. Would the musical world have been satisfied if he had denounced his friend to ingratiate himself to that world? Denunciations – of family members, friends, work colleagues – were an integral feature of Soviet life under Stalin and I don't think it would have brought much honour to Gergiev if he had resorted to this infamous practice in light of Putin's invasion of Ukraine. I have no idea what Gergiev thinks of this invasion. It is deeply upsetting and frightening, but the wave of virtue signalling on the part of the music industry in the West does not reflect very well on its members, many of whom will not have the slightest idea of the issues involved between Russia and Ukraine.
***Linda Edmondson,** Westbury*

Early starter

Richard Morrison's memories of David Munrow and the Early Music Consort (February issue) reminds me of the late John Beckett, who worked with Michael Morrow's Musica Reservata as early as 1960-61. Their concert in Dublin in 1970 was an eye- and ear-opener for Irish audiences and inspired the repertoire of the Consort of St Sepulchre, named after a long-vanished archbishop's palace next to the still-functioning Marsh's Library where much of their music was discovered. Early music flourished in Ireland thereafter, with several groups today performing on period instruments. Beckett, a gifted musicologist and harpsichordist, contributed hugely to this development.
***Richard Pine,** Corfu*

MUP374

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Complete the order form in capital letters and send to
FREEPOST IMMEDIATE MEDIA

UK DIRECT DEBIT **SAVE OVER 40%**

☑ **YES**, I would like to subscribe to *BBC Music Magazine* by UK Direct Debit, paying just £49.99 every 13 issues*.

YOUR DETAILS (essential)

Title First name Surname

Address

Town Postcode

Home telephone number

Mobile telephone number

Email address

KEEP IN TOUCH

BBC Music Magazine would like to email you with updates, special offers and promotions.
Please tick here if you would like to receive these ☐ (You can unsubscribe at any time.)

We'd also love to tell you about other offers and promotions from our publisher, Our Media Limited. If you'd rather not be contacted this way please tick here. Post ☐ Phone ☐

Your data will be held by Immediate Media Company Limited (a parent company of Our Media Limited). For information about how we protect your personal data, please read our policy at policies.immediate.co.uk/privacy.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit DIRECT Debit

TO: The Manager (Bank/Building Society)

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch sort code

Reference Number (Internal use only)

Originator's identification number

4 4 3 7 7 3

Instructions to bank: Please pay **APS RE Our Media Ltd Debits** from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with **APS RE Our Media Ltd** and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature Date / /

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account.

GIVE A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION – **If you would like to give a subscription to *BBC Music Magazine* to a friend, tick this box ☐ and include the recipient's address details on a separate sheet.**

OTHER PAYMENT METHODS For a year's subscription (13 issues)

☐ **UK cheque/credit card** – £62.30 for 13 issues **SAVE OVER 25%**
☐ **Europe** €82.99 for 13 issues
☐ **Rest of World** $85.99 for 13 issues
USA $99/**Canada** $131.40 – Please call toll free 1-866 461 4730
South African subscribers call +27 011 265 4303
☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to *Our Media Ltd* for £

Overseas subscribers post form to: BBC Music Magazine, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, UK PO Box 3327

CREDIT CARD ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Maestro

Card number

Valid from / Expiry date / Issue no (Maestro only)

Signature Date

*All savings are calculated as a percentage of Basic Annual Rate. The UK Basic annual rate is £84.50 which includes event issues (issues charged higher than standard cover price) published in a 12-month period. Save 40% offer is available to UK residents paying by Direct Debit only. Full details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available upon request. The magazine featured above is shown for illustration purposes. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. **Offer ends 30th April 2022**. If calling from overseas, please call +44 1604 973 721

YOUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

- **Save over 40%** – when you subscribe today!
- **Pay just £49.99** every 13 issues!
- Receive **FREE UK delivery** direct to your door
- **Never miss a single issue** of the world's best-selling classical music magazine
- Build up a listening library with a **complete work** on each month's cover CD

GETTY

Don't miss this fantastic offer
SUBSCRIBE TODAY

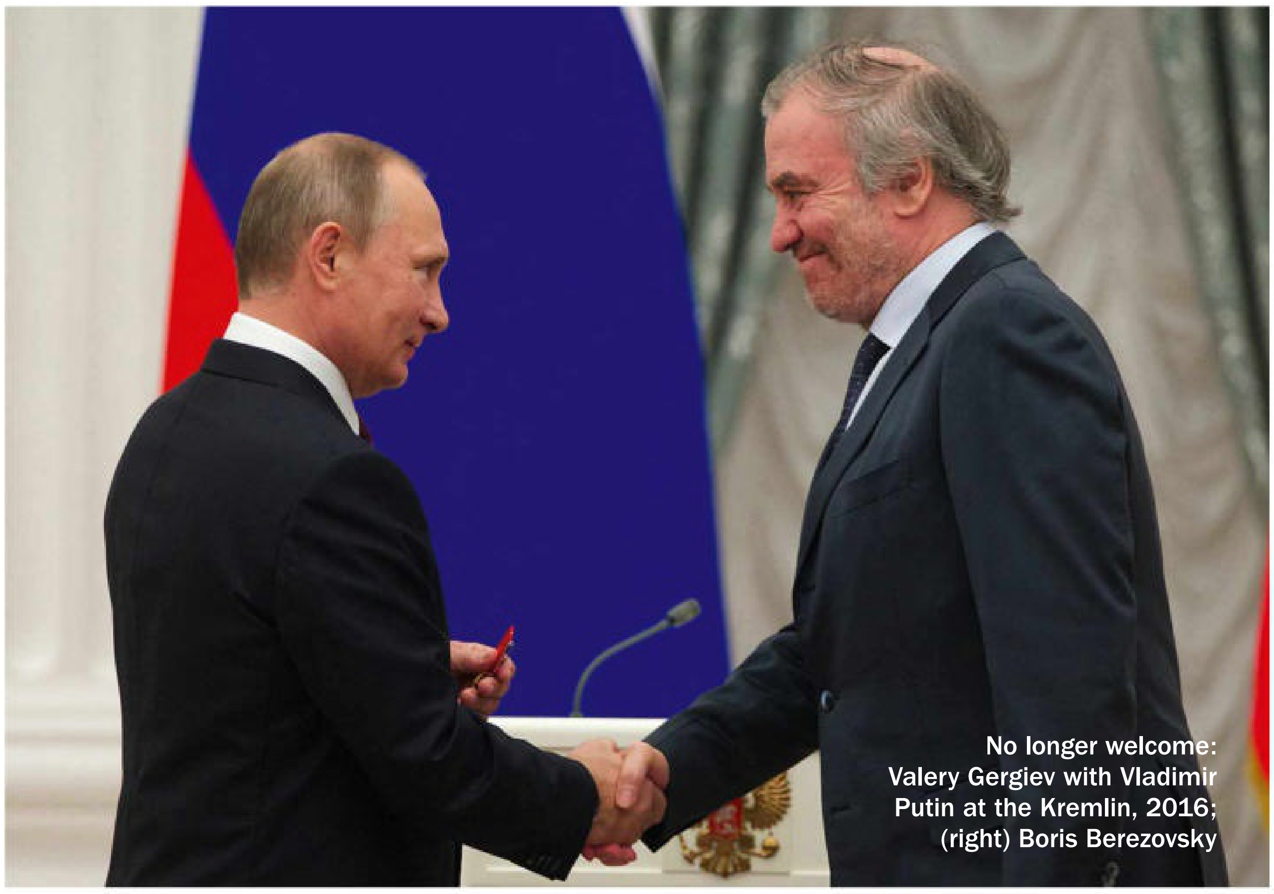
INTRODUCTORY OFFER
SAVE OVER 40%*
when you subscribe to BBC Music Magazine
SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT
www.buysubscriptions.com/MUP374
or call our subscriber hotline on 03330 162 118† and quote ORDER CODE MUP374
†Calls from landlines will cost up to 9p per minute. Call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute but are included in free call packages. Lines are open 9.00am-5.00pm Mon-Fri.

The *full* score

Our pick of the month's news, views and interviews

Classical music world cuts ties with Russian artists

Gergiev and Berezovsky among those dropped by orchestras, festivals and agents



No longer welcome: Valery Gergiev with Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin, 2016; (right) Boris Berezovsky

GETTY

From orchestras and opera houses to artists' agents, the classical music world has expressed its horror at Russia's invasion of Ukraine by distancing itself from Russian performers. In some instances, this has meant cancelling performances by those who have failed to condemn the Putin regime, in others a wider move against Russian musicians as a whole has been taken.

Among the high-profile artists who have suddenly found themselves with blank diaries outside their home country are conductor Valery Gergiev, pianist Denis Matsuev and soprano Anna Netrebko. Gergiev, the former principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, was sacked as chief conductor of the Munich Philharmonic soon after the invasion, with the Edinburgh and Verbier festivals also asking for his resignation as honorary president and music director respectively, the Rotterdam Philharmonic scrapping its annual Gergiev Festival and Milan's

> Gergiev has previously expressed his support for the annexation of Crimea

La Scala replacing him as conductor of its Tchaikovsky *Queen of Spades*. Known to be a close friend of Putin's, he appeared in a TV ad for the presidential campaign in 2012 and has previously expressed his support for the annexation of Crimea.

Even less likely to be performing in the west for the foreseeable future is pianist Boris Berezovsky who, in a TV interview for Perviy Kanal, caused outrage by suggesting that Russia should surround Kyiv and cut off its electricity, to which a Russian military officer replied that doing so would cause 'a humanitarian catastrophe'. Berezovsky was promptly dropped by his agent Productions Sarfati.

Elsewhere, some organisations have closed their door to all Russian performers – though the Honens International Piano Competition, which initially did so, later changed its mind – while the Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra made the headlines by removing Tchaikovsky's 'Little Russian' Symphony No. 2 and *1812 Overture* from a concert on the grounds that the timing could cause offence.

Others, however, have insisted that, while they condemn the invasion, they would still be welcoming Russian musicians and repertoire onto their stages. Several leading Russian performers have also spoken out against the invasion, including pianists Evgeny Kissin and Alexander Melnikov, and conductors Vasily Petrenko and Kirill Petrenko.

A united voice: Petr Limonov conducts in Trafalgar Square

Orchestral musicians join forces in support of Ukraine

On Sunday 6 March, musicians gathered in London's Trafalgar Square to perform an impromptu concert in protest at the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Conducted by Petr Limonov, the orchestra had been gathered together via a WhatsApp group and included violinist Jennifer Pike and, playing the horn, composer Gabriel Prokofiev.

'At this time we are trying to do all we can for a horrific situation, and musicians only really know one way, which is to play,' said Pike about the performance, which included the Ukrainian national anthem and Mykola Lysenko's *Prayer for Ukraine*. As you can see below, many other musicians have also been lending themselves to the cause...

THE MONTH IN NUMBERS

10,000

...pounds raised by conductor David Hill, the Bach Choir and friends at a Sing For Ukraine event in London.

12

...discs by Ukrainian composers being sold via Presto Music by labels BIS, Chandos, Delphian, Naxos and Toccata, with all proceeds going towards humanitarian aid.

19

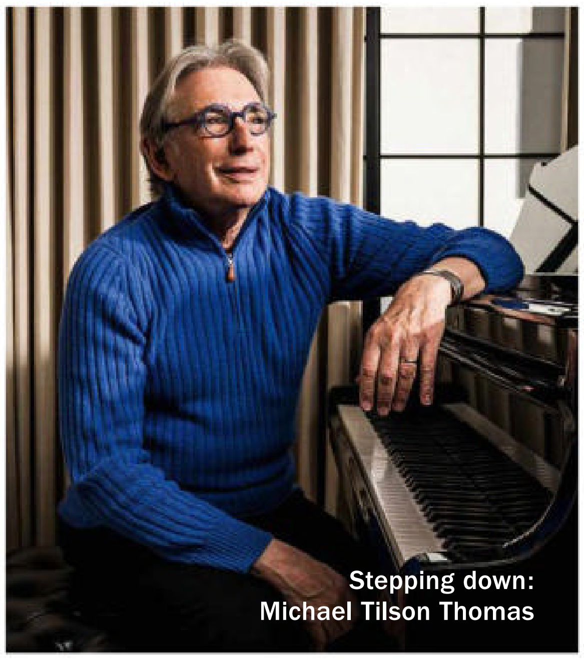
...international ballet stars on stage together at the Coliseum in London for March's Dance For Ukraine event.

94

...violinists from 27 countries brought together on film by Kerenza Peacock (above) to raise support for Ukraine.

GETTY

SoundBites



Stepping down: Michael Tilson Thomas

New World departure

Michael Tilson Thomas is to step down as artistic director of the New World Symphony following the diagnosis of brain cancer. The 77-year-old conductor, who founded the Miami Beach-based orchestra in 1987, says that he has already been undergoing treatment and that 'I now see that it is time for me to consider what level of work and responsibilities I can sustain in the future.'

Prayer for peace

John Rutter has responded to the crisis in Ukraine by writing a new choral work called *Ukrainian Prayer* and making the score available for free on the internet. Many choirs have already taken the opportunity to sing the English composer's piece in concert, and a video of Rutter introducing the work and conducting a performance of it has, at the time of writing, already racked up 220,000 views on YouTube.

Festival first

The Edinburgh International Festival has announced that Nicola Benedetti is to be its new director. The Scottish violinist, 34, will be the first female director in the festival's 75-year history when she takes over from Fergus Linehan. Acclaimed both as a performer and for her work in music education, the ever-energetic Benedetti was awarded a CBE in 2019 and was last year named Personality of the Year at the BBC Music Magazine Awards.

Stops and starts

After a two-year hiatus, Salisbury Cathedral is at last set to celebrate the restoration of its mighty Father Willis instrument with the launch of a seven-concert Organ Festival. Initially planned for 2020 but scuppered by the pandemic, the event will begin when Thomas Trotter works his magic on the manuals and pedals on 30 April and will feature one concert a month until October.

Rising Stars

Three to look out for...

Bradley Wilson *Trumpeter*

Born: Dartford, UK
Career highlight: Playing in the Chineke! Orchestra for the Louis Vuitton fashion show under Gustavo Dudamel. Playing the music of a black musician – in this case, Tyler, the Creator – to celebrate the talents of a black designer (Virgil Abloh) was a true honour.
Musical hero: I really relate to the story of composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, having struggled to fit within two different communities and cultures.
Dream concert: Something for classical music lovers and newbies alike. Perhaps a programme made up of Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, Coleridge-Taylor's Ballade in A minor and Fatboy Slim's *Right Here, Right Now*.

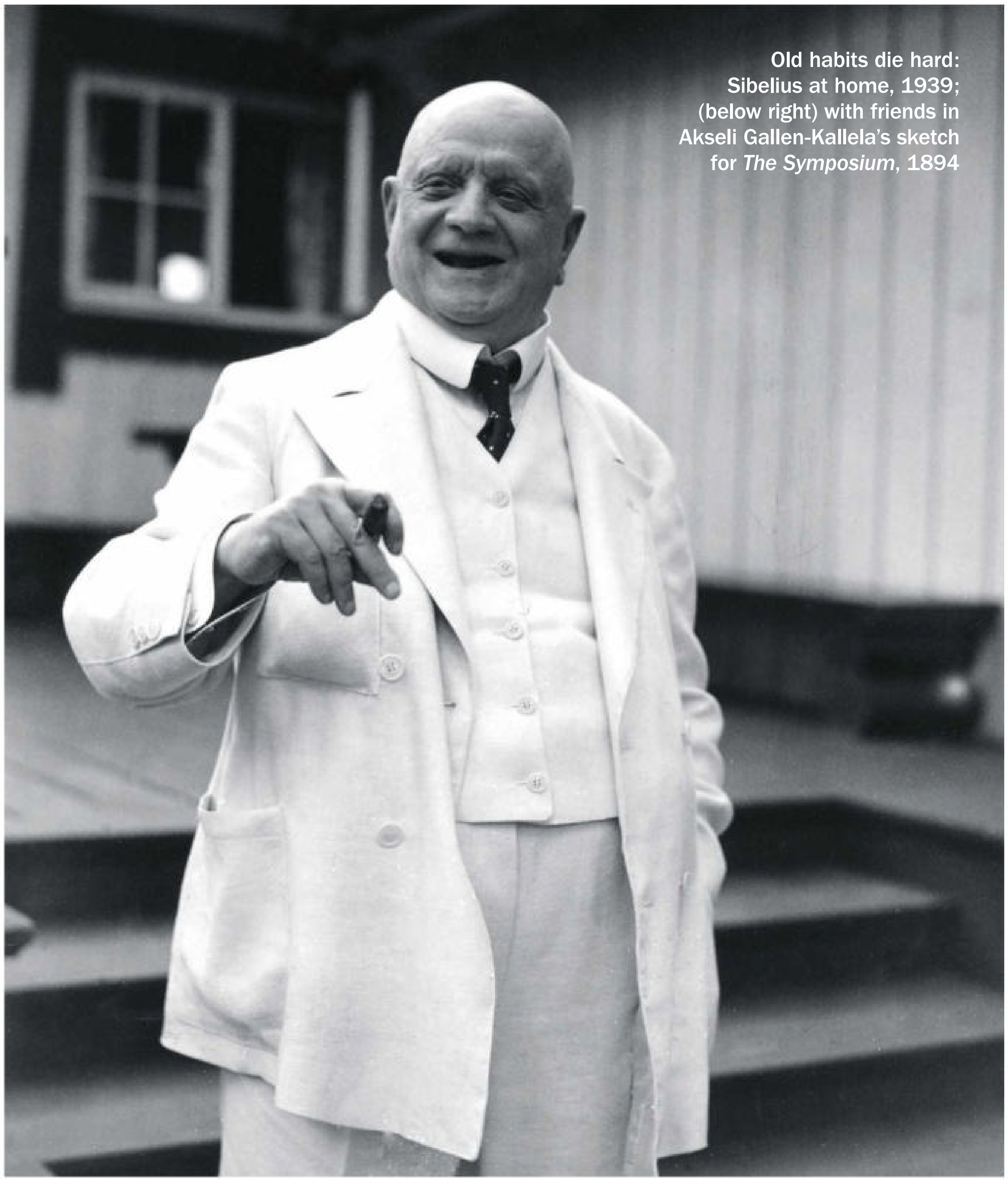
Charlotte Politi *Conductor*

Born: Paris, France
Career highlight: Moving to the UK and having the opportunity to be affiliated with great organisations as the Constant Lambert Fellow with the Royal Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet, and assistant conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. I immediately felt at home. Everyone is supportive of my artistic and career development
Musical hero: Claudio Abbado drew me into conducting, as I've always appreciated his ability to display the structure of a piece.
Dream concert: The goal of a concert is always to inspire and elevate audiences, but also to bring joy, beauty and new musical discoveries into their lives.

Pene Pati *Tenor*

Born: Apia, Samoa
Career highlight: Stepping in to perform the title role in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* at the Opéra Comique last year, which tested me mentally, physically and vocally. I was in the midst of performing in Verdi's *La traviata* in Amsterdam and had to learn everything on the train.
Musical hero: Luciano Pavarotti had the quintessential tenor sound, but he also brought opera to the masses and was what was needed to strengthen the art form.
Dream concert: I would love to perform with Adele: a pop diva collaborating with a classical divo would be rather exciting!

TIMEPIECE This month in history



Old habits die hard: Sibelius at home, 1939; (below right) with friends in Akseli Gallen-Kallela's sketch for *The Symposium*, 1894

GETTY, ALAMY, MARK LEEDOM

MAY 1908

Sibelius's dissolute lifestyle leads to the surgeon's table

'This boozing – in itself an exceptionally pleasant occupation – has really gone too far.' Sibelius wrote these words in 1907, when several decades of self-indulgence and carousing were finally catching up on him. As well as regularly downing liberal quantities of alcohol – one famous painting, Akseli Gallen-Kallela's *The Symposium*, shows the composer, seated with his companions, decidedly the worse for wear during a drinking session – Sibelius was a connoisseur of fine cigars, a habit he may have picked up from his father.

Together, the tobacco and alcohol were taking their toll. In November 1907, while in St Petersburg conducting his Third Symphony, Sibelius complained of hoarseness in his voice. This persisted, and in the New Year he was hospitalised for a period. 'He will soon be dead,' his mentor Axel Carpelan

wrote, 'unless he stops smoking and consuming spirits.'

In May 1908, things reached a tipping point. Informed by a specialist in Helsinki that he had a throat tumour, Sibelius had an exploratory operation on 12 May, when part of the tumour was removed. It was non-malignant, but Sibelius was nonetheless referred for further testing to Professor Fränkel, a specialist in Berlin. The problem was, how would he get there? Sibelius's extravagant social habits meant that he was often short of money, and he struggled to raise the loan necessary for the journey. Eventually securing it, he set out for Berlin with his wife Aino at the end of May.

The medical treatment he received there was far from smooth and unproblematic. 'I was obliged to submit to 13 operations on my throat without any result,' Sibelius complained later, perhaps exaggerating a little. In the end, it was Fränkel's young assistant who managed to excise the offending area. 'A strong jerk, a shout of triumph, and he pulled out the instrument,' Sibelius reported. 'I was released from torture.'

There were, however, various repercussions from the operation. One was to do with Sibelius's bohemian lifestyle. 'Fränkel has forbidden me alcohol for the remainder of my days,' the composer dolefully informed his brother. Tobacco was outlawed too, leaving Sibelius bereft of his habitual creature comforts. 'Life is something totally different without these stimulants,' he mused. 'I never imagined it could have come to this.'

For Sibelius's wife Aino, Fränkel's prohibitions were a godsend. For years she had been forced to tolerate her husband's drinking binges, when she was left at home to raise their infant children. Occasionally, the pressure proved too much. In 1898, when pregnant with the couple's third daughter, Aino warned Sibelius that his dissolute behaviour was 'right on the borderline', and that he risked becoming 'strange and really unpleasant'. Nine years later, the accumulated stress of living with a heavy drinker led to her being temporarily admitted to a sanatorium.

Life was easier after Sibelius's throat operation. Shaken by the experience, the composer gave up alcohol and tobacco for the next seven years, a period described by Aino as the happiest of their marriage. During his abstinence, Sibelius produced major pieces such as *Luonnotar*, the bleak Fourth Symphony and the string quartet *Voces intimae*, and stayed at home instead of disappearing on benders for days on end.

'He will soon be dead unless he stops smoking and consuming spirits'

But not long after World War I broke out, he began smoking and drinking again – moderately at first, but by 1917 the bingeing had resurfaced so badly that a divorce was being mooted.

It never happened. Sibelius lived another four decades, dying aged 91 in 1957. Aino followed 12 years later, aged 97. 'All of the doctors who ordered me not to smoke or drink alcohol died a long time ago,' Sibelius reputedly said. 'But I go on living.' ***Terry Blain***

Flying pioneers: Wilbur and Orville Wright

Also in May 1908

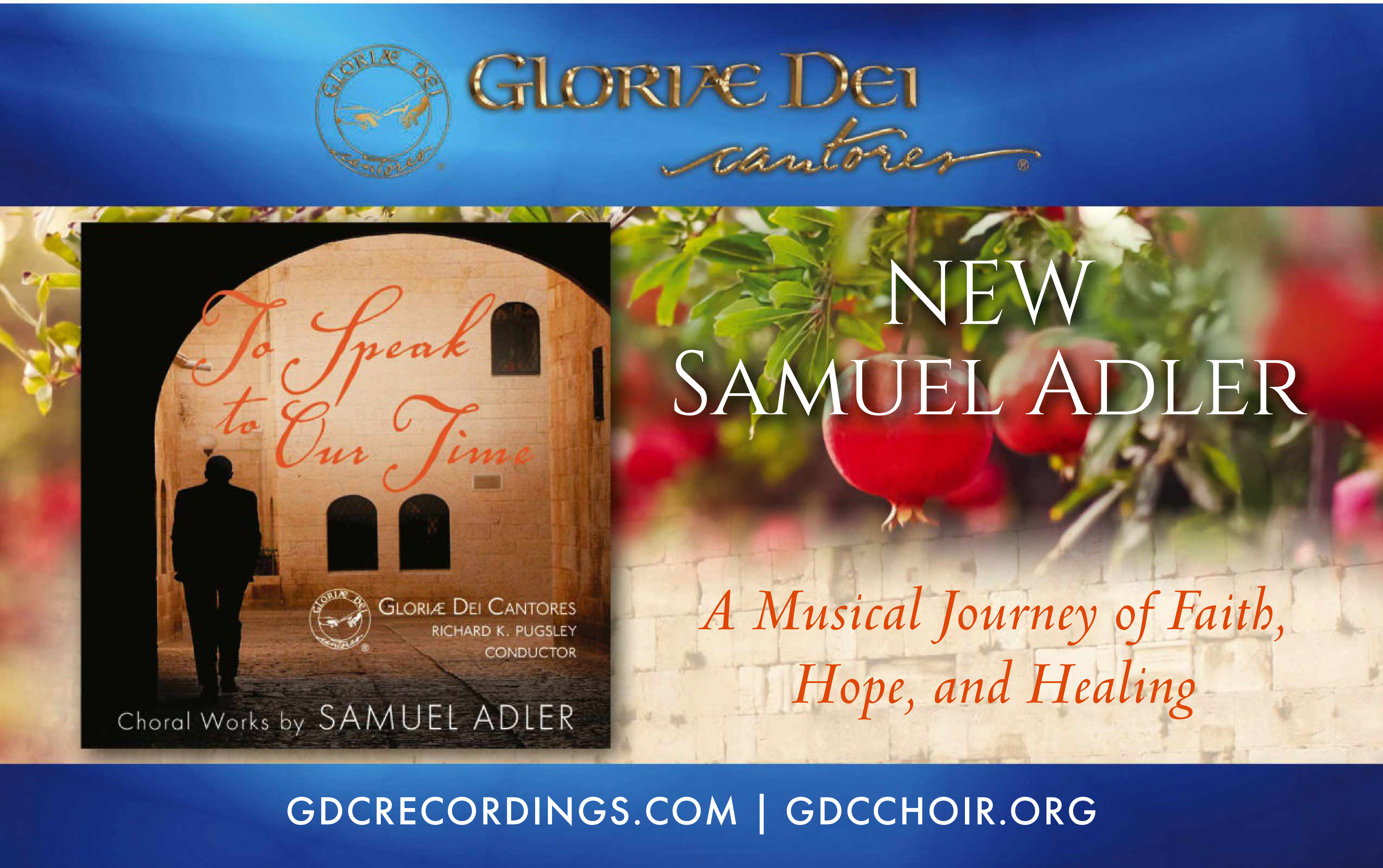
7th: The author and playwright **Ludovic Halévy** dies in Paris, aged 74. Along with novels such as *Monsieur et Madame Cardinal*, he is best remembered for the opera librettos he co-wrote with Henri Meilhac, including Offenbach's *La belle Hélène* and *Barbe-bleue*, and Bizet's *Carmen*. Halévy also co-wrote the libretto of Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* with Hector Crémieux.

14th: In Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, **Wilbur and Orville Wright** take turns to fly one of their mechanics, Charles Furnas, in their plane, making him the first ever passenger in a powered flight. Now with upright controls and a second seat, the plane has been adapted from that in which the Wright brothers made the first ever flight in December 1903.

23rd: The American Jay Gould II wins the gold medal in *jeu de paume* – a game usually known as real tennis – at the **Summer Olympics in London**, beating Britain's Eustace Miles in straight sets in the final. Though the *jeu de paume* event takes just six days, the Olympics themselves run for six months, from 27 April to 31 October.

24th: Sir Alexander Mackenzie conducts the tenors and basses of the Royal Choral Society and the London Symphony Orchestra in the first public performance of **Elgar**'s *Follow The Colours* at the Royal Albert Hall. The words are by Captain William de Courcy Stretton, who won a competition to write 'a marching song for British soldiers'. Elgar shows no affection for the work.

26th Hired by British businessman William Knox D'Arcy, the engineer and geologist George B Reynolds **strikes oil** at Masjid-i-Sulaiman in Persia, the first to do so in the Middle East. With Knox D'Arcy's funds running low, Reynolds had been asked to stop and return home but, thinking he was close to a breakthrough, he had ignored those orders.

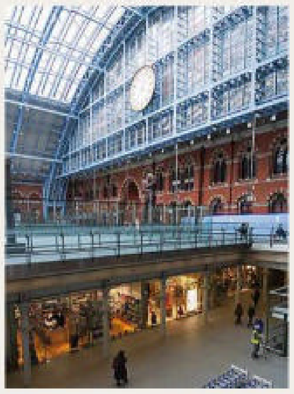
Royal Albert Hall presents
MILOŠ
IN-THE-ROUND
The award-winning guitarist returns to perform his greatest hits, featuring everything from Bach to The Beatles.
Wed 1 Jun 2022, 7:30pm
150 MORE HISTORY TO MAKE Royal Albert Hall
in association with CUNARD
WE'RE GOOD TO GO
royalalberthall.com/loveclassical

GLORIÆ DEI cantores
To Speak to Our Time
GLORIÆ DEI CANTORES
RICHARD K. PUGSLEY
CONDUCTOR
Choral Works by SAMUEL ADLER
NEW SAMUEL ADLER
A Musical Journey of Faith, Hope, and Healing
GDCRECORDINGS.COM | GDCCHOIR.ORG

Let us entertain you, say Ludwig and Robbie

Robbie Williams is marking the 25th anniversary of 'Angels' – yes, it really is that long ago – by remixing the song with music by Beethoven. Well, Beethoven of sorts. Teaming up with the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, the English singer-songwriter has produced a new version of his 1997 No. 1 hit single that incorporates moments from the German composer's Tenth Symphony – a work that itself never got beyond sketch form in his lifetime, but was completed by Beethoven-Haus musicologists using Artificial Intelligence in 2021. 'It's fascinating how much technology is now enabling art,' enthuses Williams. Beethoven was unavailable for comment.

DÉJÀ VU

History just keeps on repeating itself…



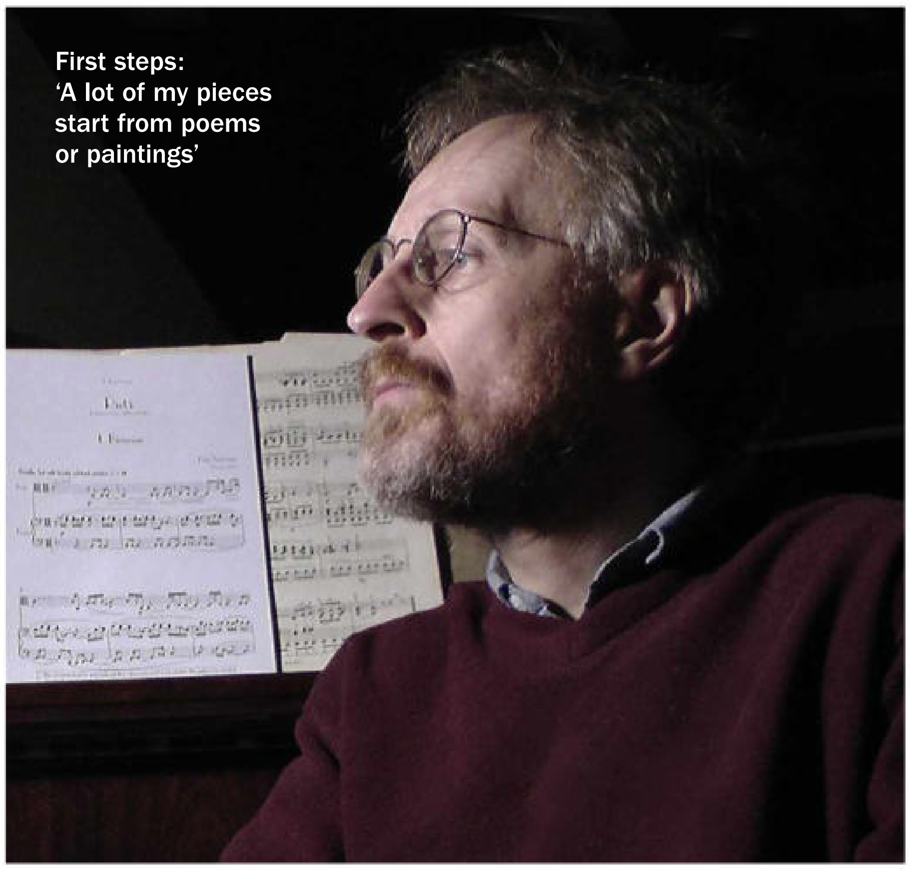
St Pancras International (left) proved a very tuneful place to be on 8 March, as the London station marked International Women's Day by hosting seven new mini-operas by female composers. Titled 'Lost and Found' and conducted by Yshani Perinpanayagam and Ellie Slorach, the project proved a great success. Trainspotters, meanwhile, will have noted it down as the latest in a series of high-profile station-based performances…

In 2004, passengers at London's **Paddington Station** found themselves suddenly serenaded by *Flashmob – The Opera*, a mix of favourite moments from operas including *Madama Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni* and *La traviata* performed by three singers and the BBC Concert Orchestra. For commuters waiting for the 17.30 from Crewe at **Birmingham New Street Station**, meanwhile, orchestral music has proved a welcome distraction more than once. In 2016, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra played two concerts that included music by the train-mad Dvorák, and the same trick was repeated in 2017, this time with music director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla at the helm. The following year, **St Pancras Station** and the London Mozart Players marked their 150th and 70th birthdays with a rendition of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21, led by Howard Shelley at the keys. And then there's Joshua Bell. Having made headlines by going unrecognised while busking at Washington's L'Enfant Plaza Metro Station in 2007, the violinist returned in 2014 to perform at the city's **Union Station** – this time to a huge crowd.

GETTY ILLUSTRATION: JONTY CLARK

MEET THE COMPOSER

Peter Seabourne



First steps: 'A lot of my pieces start from poems or paintings'

It was with renewed passion that the British composer Peter Seabourne returned to his craft in 2001, after retreating from it in 1989. Five symphonies, a clutch of concertos and a nine-volume piano cycle called *Steps* later, he is making up for lost time. Volume 6 of *Steps* is released on Willowhayne Records in May.

I was no prodigy, but I remember inventing a score at primary school. I worked out that you needed to see all the instruments playing all at once. I think it had recorders, and everything was in the wrong order, but it fired me up and became a kind of obsession.

Composition was a pretty off-the-beaten-track activity at Cambridge University. I ended up studying with Robin Holloway, which was the biggest stroke of luck. He was 'the young fogey', writing scenes from Schumann when everyone else was into Serialism. He was wonderfully inspiring; after every session I just couldn't wait to get back to the piece of manuscript paper sitting on my desk.

I stopped writing for 12 years and disowned everything I'd written. I realised that while the urge was there, I didn't have a clue what I was doing and I just started to detest new music in some ways. So I went off and ran a school music department for 26 years. Although I wasn't writing, I was arranging a lot and relearning my craft, so when I did start again it was almost as if it was a kind of gestation period.

***Steps* was my way back.** Michael Bell, a fantastic pianist, taught at my school and he had a gifted pupil. And so the very first two pieces I wrote in the *Steps* cycle were for each of them. It was like a cloud lifting. Gradually I gathered more and more pieces into a first volume; there are nine now.

For me, music is about expression and not about playing games with notes. When I'm beginning, it has to have some kind of expressive starting point, which might be musical or it might be extra-musical. A lot of my pieces start from poems or paintings, but not all by any means. The symphonies are all pretty abstract.

When I start a piece, I have no idea what will happen, or where it will go. It's like jumping in the river and trying to survive. Often I find that the piece needs to be expanded from inside, as if I'm blowing up a balloon.

Studio*Secrets*

Debut: Rachel Willis-Sørensen signs with Sony

We reveal who's recording what and where...

NMC continues to champion new music, and its forthcoming roster of releases features recordings of music by Rebecca Saunders, Richard Causton and Ayanna Witter-Johnson. First up, though, is British-Iranian composer ***Shiva Feshareki***'s *Turning World*. NMC releases the album, which features orchestra, organ and turntables, on 27 May.

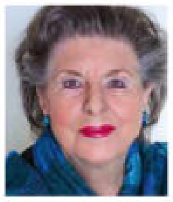
In 1985, composer ***John Adams*** was signed exclusively to Nonesuch and since then they have generated an enormous back catalogue. To mark his 75th birthday, the label is putting out a comprehensive collection of his complete recorded works. The 40-disc set, taking in recordings from 1985-2020, will be a real treasure trove. It is released on 24 June.

John Williams celebrated his 90th birthday in February, and the composer has a couple of new recordings on the way. Firstly, on 3 June, is DG's live recording of his Violin Concerto No. 2 from the Tanglewood Festival. Prior to that, on 20 May, Sony releases a revised version of Williams's Cello Concerto featuring Yo-Yo Ma.

Sony Classical also recently announced its signing of the soprano ***Rachel Willis-Sørensen***. The American has impressed audiences and critics with her vocal range and keen sense of drama. Her debut recording has been released hot on the heels of the news, and it features arias by Verdi, Mozart, Puccini, Dvořák and Lehár, plus an appearance by tenor Jonas Kaufmann.

PARMA Recordings' 'Call for Scores' initiative goes from strength to strength, with its latest 'call' receiving some 130 submissions from Black and Hispanic composers. Cellist Thomas Mesa and pianist Michelle Cann will head to the studio during the spring to record five works, by Andrea Casarrubios, Kevin Day, Sebastian Quesada, Carlos Carrillo and Mario Oyanadel. Look our for an album release later this year.

Career heydays: Jacqueline Delman in 1970; (right) at the recording of *Elijah* with Josef Krips, Norma Procter and treble Michael Cunningham



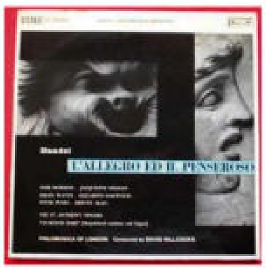
REWIND

Great artists talk about their past recordings

This month: JACQUELINE DELMAN *Soprano*

MY FINEST MOMENT

Handel *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso*
Jacqueline Delman (soprano), Peter Pears (tenor) et al; Philomusica of London/David Willcocks
L'Oiseau-Lyre SOL-600-25-6 (1961)



L'Allegro ed il Penseroso with David Willcocks was a fantastic recording from fairly early in my career – the early 1960s. The other artists included Peter Pears, Elsie Morison and Hervey Allen. I'd worked with Hervey a lot, but I hadn't worked with Peter before; he was incredible – one of the two singers I knew who could sing anything at any speed. I had worked a lot with David and we did this piece in concert quite a few times before we recorded it – which is always a good thing to be able to do. It's a fantastic oratorio based on Milton's poem and it's very varied; it compares happiness and joy with the thoughtful and melancholy, and it has a lot of arias, including the one which is most well known, 'Sweet Bird', which fell to me. It was something that Jenny Lind used to sing, as did all the great coloratura sopranos, so it was quite an honour to do that aria. I remember when we'd finished recording it, David suddenly said, 'There's something missing here; you should have a cadenza at the end!' So he sent me up into the attic with the flautist, who I believe was Gareth Morris, and told us to write a cadenza, which we did. I think it just sort of made all the difference to the aria.

MY FONDEST MEMORY

Shostakovich *Seven Romances on Poems by Aleksander Blok*
Jacqueline Delman (soprano) et al
BIS LP-7 (1976)

I recorded the seven Blok songs by Shostakovich for Robert von Bahr's BIS Records. It was my first recording for the label and one of Robert's very first recordings. I recorded the Shostakovich, which was with piano, violin and cello, and Messiaen's *Poèmes pour mi*. Robert was, at that time, married to a flautist called Gunilla von Bahr and so we found a few pieces that had flute obbligato – including Michael Head's *A Piper*. The recording was very well received, though I wasn't terribly happy with it, because I always felt perhaps the balance could have been a little better!

I sang a lot of Russian music later in my career and I was instrumental in bringing Shostakovich's 14th Symphony to Sweden. I'd heard the recording with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Galina Vishnevskaya and decided I wanted to sing it, so I made a recording and played it for a conductor friend. The result was that we did the first performances in Sweden and I then sang it about 14 times with different conductors, including Maxim Shostakovich. It was actually the first time that he had conducted the work, so it was a very moving experience for both of us.

I'D LIKE ANOTHER GO AT...

Mendelssohn *Elijah*
Jacqueline Delman (soprano) et al; London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra/ Josef Krips
Decca ECS 650-652 (1972)

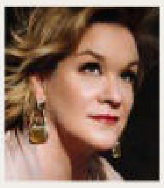
I took on this recording of *Elijah* at a week's notice, because Jennifer Vyvyan was taken ill. At that point my singing was mostly in opera and lieder recitals and I'd sung very little oratorio – I was very young, about 23 or 24, and had never even heard *Elijah* so I was quite worried. But I took it on and soon *Elijah* became one of my favorite works. I sang it dozens of times after that and felt I had made it mine. It would have been great to record it again, perhaps with Janet Baker. Our careers went rather in parallel at the beginning and we sang frequently together, often in Handel operas and oratorios. For the tenor part I would probably have chosen Alexander Young, a wonderful British tenor with such a beautiful voice.

I didn't have anything against recording in studios but I always felt I really did my best in a live performance with an audience. But I'm afraid that train has gone now; although my voice is still in good order, I don't think anyone is going to engage me at the age of 91!

Jacqueline Delman has released a collection of rarities called 'From My Archives' which is released on the Oak Grove label and available on her website

ACKWARE PHOTOGRAPHS, DAVID ALER, JIYANG CHEN, GETTY, OLIVIA RENAUD

Buried**Treasure**

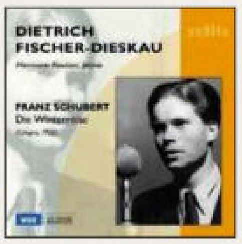


Mezzo ***Alice Coote*** introduces us to a selection of her favourite recordings

Weill Die Muschel von Margate – 'Petroleum Song'
Teresa Stratas (soprano), Richard Woitach (piano) *Nonesuch D-79019*

My father used to play Kurt Weill while he was painting in his studio on the top floor of the house. The songs on this disc aren't that often performed and this one just feels so current right now. It's basically about the destruction of Margate by oil companies, and the refrain is 'A thousand corpses make a well – Shell, Shell, Shell'. Teresa Stratas was a truly great communicator. She lends her edge to this, plus a real theatricality. I can't get enough of it.

Schubert Winterreise – 1952 Radio Recording Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Hermann Reutter (piano) *Audite 95580*



Fischer-Dieskau did this a few years after he was a prisoner of war. It's not unsophisticated, but it hasn't been recorded for connoisseurs – with the hindsight of everything we know about how this piece can be sung, because it hadn't been recorded that much at that point. The level of pain in his voice, which he's almost trying to hide, is just so evident and incredibly moving.

Ravi Shankar – India's Master Musician
Ravi Shankar (sitar) et al
World Pacific Records ST-1430

The first few chords of this 1960s live album used to ring out through our house like some sort of spiritual last post! I love the fact that it's him improvising on basic themes. What also appeals to me is that it's really like a Baroque exposition, like I try to do when I'm singing Baroque operas. It's spiritual, virtuosic and extraordinary. Ravi Shankar seems to go to a place that we need to be in right now.

Alice Coote's album of Schubert songs is out on 1 May on Hyperion

THE LISTENING SERVICE

Why write about music?

Mendelssohn once said that music is too precise for words – so is writing about it a fool's errand? **Tom Service** suggests why so many great minds persist in this 'folly'

ILLUSTRATION: MARIA CORTE MAIDAGAN

Want to seem really clever when you're next having a convivial conversation about music? Easy: proffer the aphorism that 'writing about music is like dancing about architecture', and your audience is likely to be reduced to a moment of stunned stupefaction. It's a phrase that conveys the redundancy of writing about music, using mere words to convey the power of sound. There's nothing new about this aperçu: the American comedian Martin Mull is probably the original coiner of this quippette in the 1970s, but it's been variously attributed to Frank Zappa and Laurie Anderson, to Elvis Costello and John Lennon. Although Lennon actually said writing about music is like 'talking about love-making' – Lennon used a different word – 'who wants to talk about it?'.

Well: over the millennia of oral and literary history, quite a large percentage of humanity want to talk, and write, about music. If it really were the acme of intellectual and expressive redundancy, why on earth is there so much of it, from the Ancient Greeks to 19th-century memoirs and 21st-century revisionist histories, from Plato's theory of music and society to Hector Berlioz's memoirs and Pierre Boulez's essays?

It's because writing has the power to change how you imagine music, even and especially pieces and songs and performance you thought you knew, whether it's a line in a novel or a poem, a phrase that sparks an idea that latches into your listening – or this paragraph, by Jackie Kay, on the blues of Bessie Smith: 'Bessie Smith's raw, unplugged voice dragged you right down to a place you had never been. It seemed to drag you down to the depths of yourself. Her voice carried a kind of knowing that made you feel this woman knew everything about life and was not frightened of any of it... Her voice made me want to be her.' Writing can be the light on the waves that allows us to perceive the thing itself – the music – in different ways.

Writing can be the light on the waves that allows us to perceive the thing itself

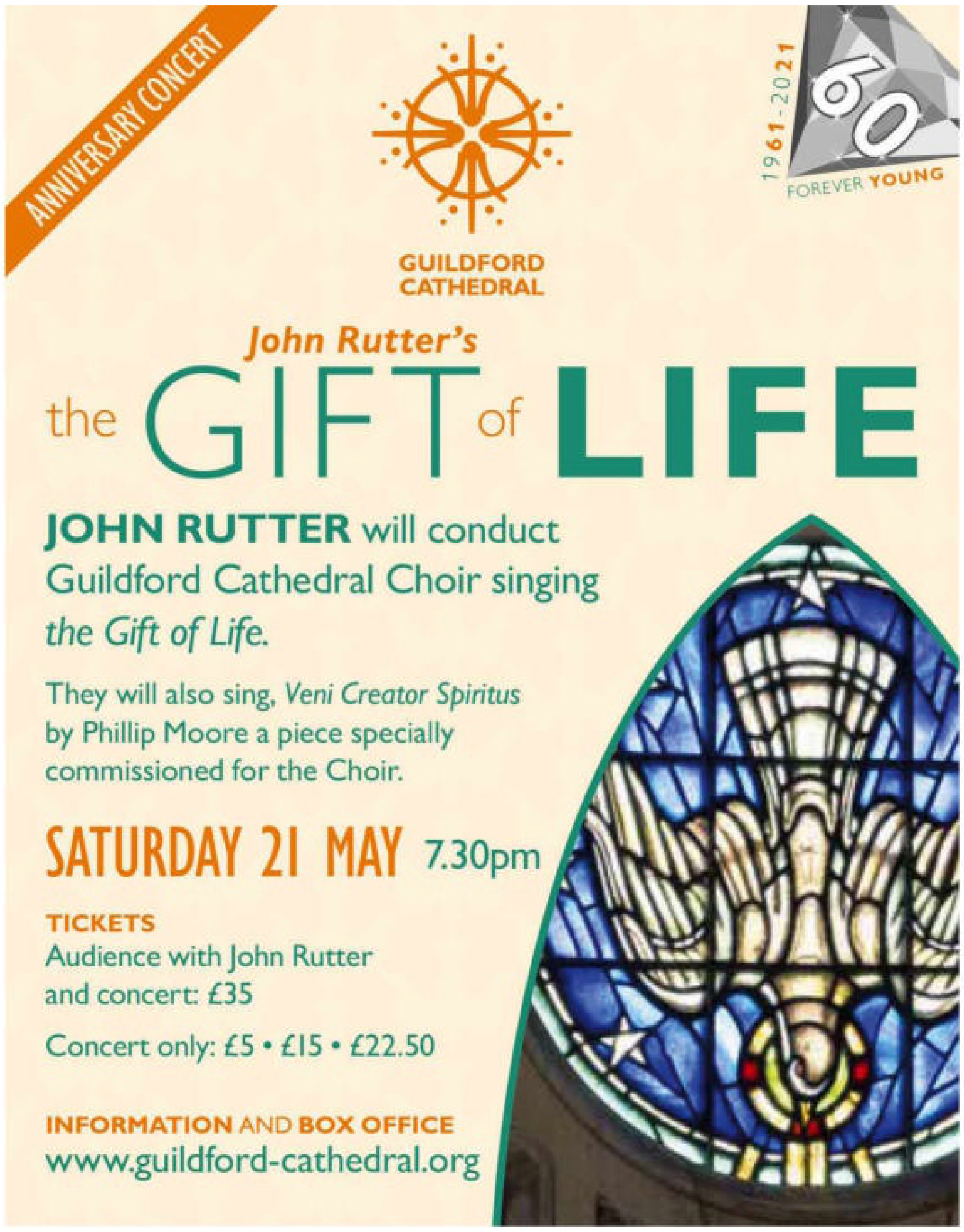
And that difference is the point. Writing about music isn't trying to be music – it's writing, just as a ballet about architecture is still a dance. And without difference, without metaphor, without language standing for other phenomena in the world – trees, birds, friendship, politics, oceanic trenches and asteroid belts – we wouldn't be able to talk about anything, ever. To suggest that dancing about architecture or writing about music are pointless exercises is basically to say there's no point representing any phenomenon in any other medium: – which would mean the end of all art-making, the end of all conversation, and the end of all creativity.

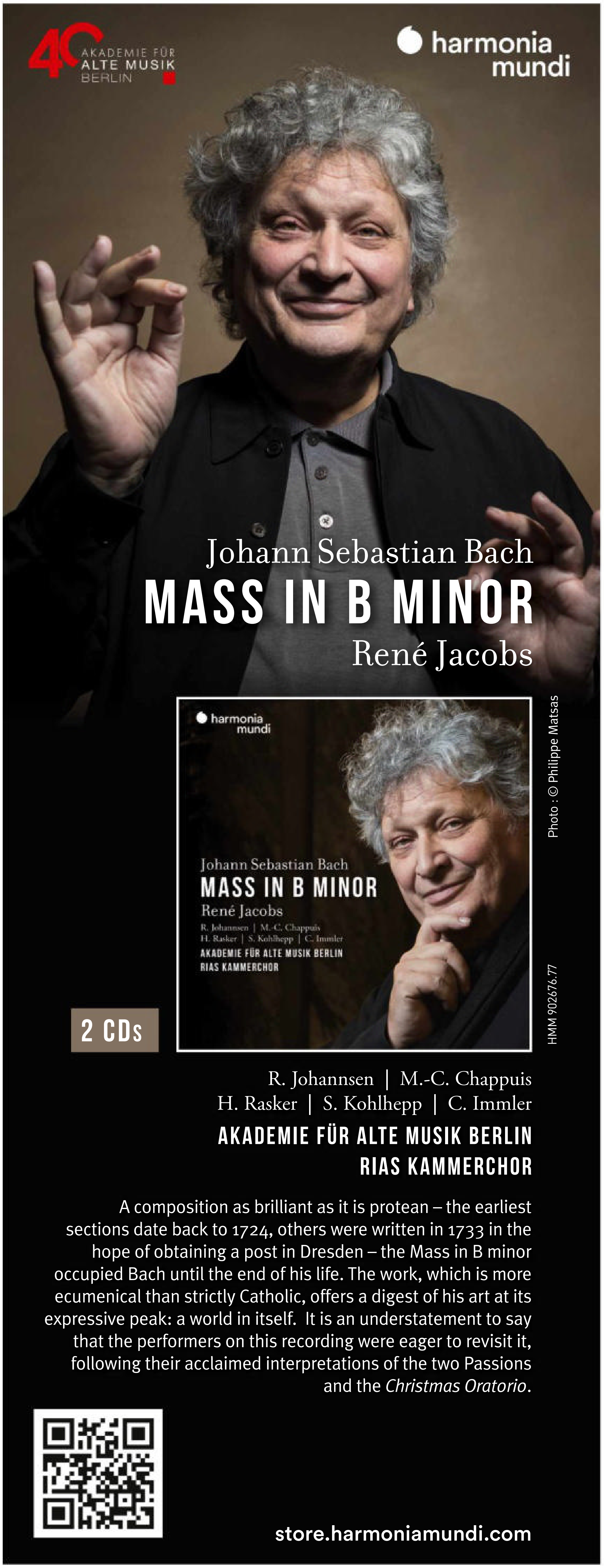
So we should all keep doing it: what writers, philosophers and composers from Plato to Margaret Fuller, from Claude Debussy to Rose Tremain have been doing over the aeons and are still doing today, relishing the creative spaces, differences and possibilities of writing about music.

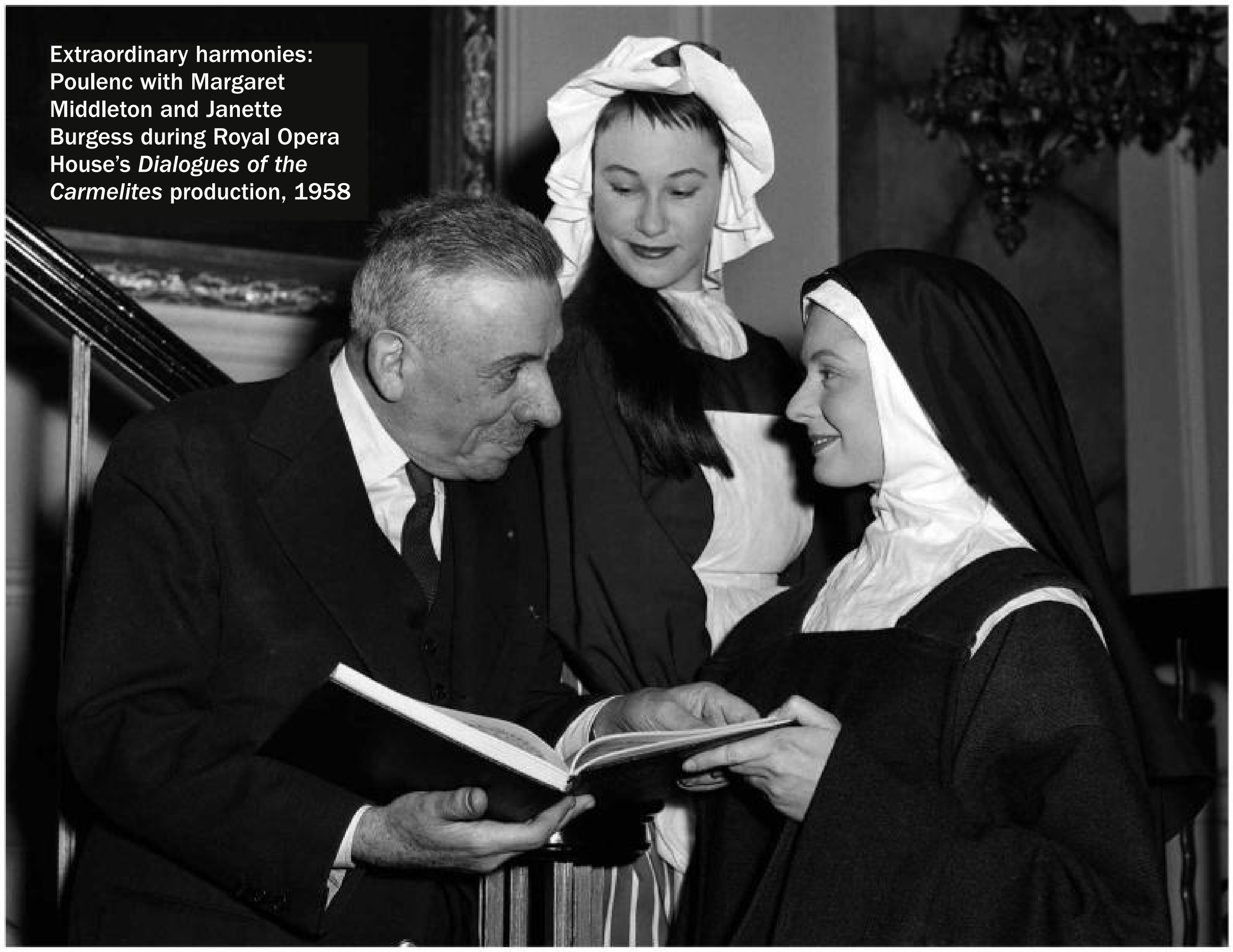
BBC RADIO 3 90–93FM

Tom Service explores how music works in *The Listening Service* on Sundays at 5pm

NEW RELEASE!!
Baroque enchantment and otherworldliness.
Unique arrangements of J.S. BACH for
recorder, viola d'amore and viola da gamba.
FHR
J.S. BACH
Two-Part Inventions
Sinfonias
Trio Sonata No. 3
Goldberg Aria
incantati
Emma Murphy recorders
Rachel Stott viola d'amore
Asako Morikawa viola da gamba
'Very enjoyable production' (MusicWeb International)
CD, downloads & streaming | MP3, CD quality & high resolution
Listen on Spotify
PRESTO CLASSICAL
IDAGIO
Listen on Apple Music
incantati.co.uk | firsthandrecords.com


ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
1961-2021
60
FOREVER YOUNG
GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL
John Rutter's
the GIFT of LIFE
JOHN RUTTER will conduct
Guildford Cathedral Choir singing
the Gift of Life.
They will also sing, Veni Creator Spiritus
by Phillip Moore a piece specially
commissioned for the Choir.
SATURDAY 21 MAY 7.30pm
TICKETS
Audience with John Rutter
and concert: £35
Concert only: £5 • £15 • £22.50
INFORMATION AND BOX OFFICE
www.guildford-cathedral.org


40 AKADEMIE FÜR ALTE MUSIK BERLIN
harmonia mundi
Johann Sebastian Bach
MASS IN B MINOR
René Jacobs
Photo : © Philippe Matsas
harmonia mundi
Johann Sebastian Bach
MASS IN B MINOR
René Jacobs
R. Johannsen | M.-C. Chappuis
H. Rasker | S. Kohlhepp | C. Immler
AKADEMIE FÜR ALTE MUSIK BERLIN
RIAS KAMMERCHOR
2 CDs
HMM 902676.77
R. Johannsen | M.-C. Chappuis
H. Rasker | S. Kohlhepp | C. Immler
AKADEMIE FÜR ALTE MUSIK BERLIN
RIAS KAMMERCHOR
A composition as brilliant as it is protean – the earliest sections date back to 1724, others were written in 1733 in the hope of obtaining a post in Dresden – the Mass in B minor occupied Bach until the end of his life. The work, which is more ecumenical than strictly Catholic, offers a digest of his art at its expressive peak: a world in itself. It is an understatement to say that the performers on this recording were eager to revisit it, following their acclaimed interpretations of the two Passions and the Christmas Oratorio.
store.harmoniamundi.com

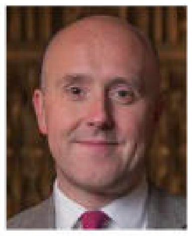


Extraordinary harmonies: Poulenc with Margaret Middleton and Janette Burgess during Royal Opera House's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* production, 1958

Music to my ears

What the classical world has been listening to this month

Mark Williams
Conductor & organist



I recently went to a student recital where I heard **Poulenc**'s Oboe Sonata. As well as reminding me that I used to play Poulenc's Flute Sonata myself, it also had me returning to an opera that I had an obsession with as a student: his *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, with that remarkable final scene with the guillotine and the 'Salve Regina'. Poulenc's harmonies are just extraordinary, and whenever you hear his music, you know it simply couldn't be by anyone else.

With this being **Franck**'s bicentenary year, a couple of fellow organists and I have been working out plans for a recital series in Oxford later in the year. Listening to his organ works reminded me, as with Poulenc, of his rich harmonic language. I have also been enjoying his Symphony in D minor, which sometimes gets a bit of a bad press for sounding like a symphony that, with its big brass surges and all, has been orchestrated by an organist. But perhaps that's what so appeals to me! I think it's beautiful.

> 'So much of the character of English song seems to be defined by melancholy'

As well as reading Kate Kennedy's biography of **Ivor Gurney**, I've been listening to a lot of English song. Maybe it's partly down to the feelings of uncertainty that we are currently living with, but so much of the character of English song seems to be defined by a certain melancholy. If you were to ask me to name a typical example, I'd suggest Gurney's 'Sleep' or Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad* settings which, like so many, display this sadness that represents the horror of war.

And also...

There's a fantastic shop in Oxford where you can get just about every spice in the world, so I've been trying out some new **curry** recipes! Making curries is a bit like playing the organ. Just as you spend time mixing different stops and thinking about combinations of colours and sounds, likewise it's just as fun to experiment with different spices in a curry.

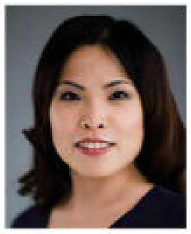
Mark Williams conducts the Choir of Magdalen College, Oxford on 'The Sweet and Merry Month' on the Opus Arte label

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Rebecca Franks

Even a Tube strike didn't disrupt my recent trip to London to hear pianist **Maurizio Pollini**. In fact, it meant that I started the evening with an enjoyable walk from Paddington Station to the Southbank, listening to the brilliant *Aria Code* opera podcast as I sauntered through the capital's parks. And then, the main event: Pollini was unforgettable. For his 80th birthday recital he played Schumann and Chopin, giving one of the most powerful accounts of the Polish composer's Second Piano Sonata I've ever heard.

Eri Nakamura Soprano



My parents never allowed me to touch our LP player, so it was a sensation when I got my own CD player and could play whatever I wanted (for some reason, I didn't want to listen to classical music on cassette tapes). Aged 11 or 12, Karajan's recording of **Tchaikovsky**'s *Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* suites was the first CD that I bought by myself. I listened to the *Sleeping Beauty* overture so many times, and it made me cry when I heard it being played in the Royal Ballet rehearsal room during my first days as a member of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme.

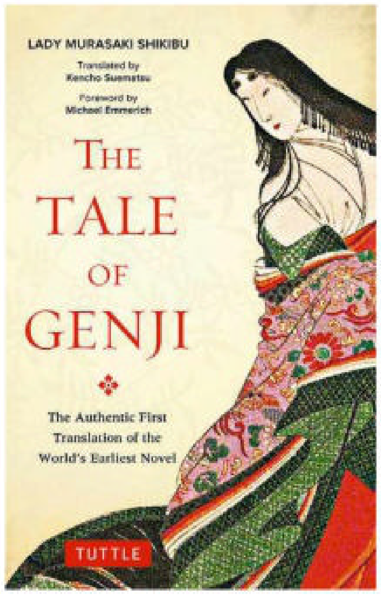
When I get home after a long opera rehearsal, I prefer not to listen to any vocal pieces – not even pop music. Instead, **JS Bach**'s Inventions for keyboard make things go back to the 'right places' in my brain. I especially like the simplicity of Glenn Gould's interpretation of these works.

There are some beautiful pieces featuring orientalism by Western composers in the early 1900s – **Ravel**'s *Shéhérazade* was written in

1904 and Puccini wrote *Madam Butterfly* at almost the same time. *Shéhérazade* gives lots of room for imagining an unknown world. It can be sung either by a soprano or mezzo soprano. I have sung it myself, but if I were to choose a recording, mezzo Anne Sofie von Otter's with the Cleveland Orchestra under Pierre Boulez sounds most expressive and sensual to my ears.

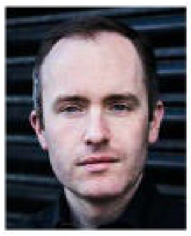
And also...

Sometimes it is not easy for me to understand **Yukio Mishima**'s philosophy in his novels, but his *Five Modern Noh Plays* are really interesting, as I could easily be in the story as one of these mysterious or complicated characters. These plays are all good as opera librettos, and the third and fifth stories have been made into operas by Japanese composers. I especially like the fourth, *The Lady Aoi*, based on my favourite episode from the old Japanese novel *The Tale of Genji*.



Eri Nakamura sings the title role in a semi-staged performance of Puccini's Madam Butterfly with the Hallé at Bridgewater Hall, 28 May

Simon Callaghan Pianist



The first thing I play on Spotify when I get in the car for a long drive is pianist **Martha Argerich**. She is my idol, and there are so many recordings. Her studio recording of Haydn's D major Concerto on Deutsche Grammophon captures her essence in live performance – specifically the last movement. It's a movement that seems to change my mood in a positive direction; it's my happy piece.

I recently made a recording of Rachmaninov's Second Symphony for two pianos. We couldn't find an arrangement so we made our own, and we used **Yevgeny Svetlanov**'s recordings as a benchmark, because we love his interpretation and skill as a conductor. There are a couple of recordings, and also a video on YouTube. The CD recording I have is with the USSR Symphony Orchestra from the 1960s. I still find new things and want to listen again.

I've been listening to the LSO recording with Christa Ludwig and Gerry Hadley of **Bernstein**'s *Candide* recently – there isn't a weak link in the cast. A favourite track is 'The Ballad of Eldorado' in Act II, when Candide has discovered this paradise and he talks about how it's almost like Heaven on Earth. It's written in 5/4, which could be a really jarring time signature, but it gives it this special, lilting quality.

And also...

The last couple of years have seen my **television watching** go up quite seriously. I binge-watched the new BBC series with Ben Whishaw, *This Is Going To Hurt.* When you watch someone give such a nuanced and spectacular performance – one which is multi-layered and with buried messages – it is almost like a musical performance. I thought it was a very special thing to come along.

Simon Callaghan's recording of British Piano Concertos is out on the Lyrita label

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Michael Church

I listen while I cook. If the manual job is simple and repetitive, I may listen to string quartets by Shostakovich and – with supreme pleasure – Haydn. If cooking demands thought and planning, I listen to pianist Rubén González, whose muscular counterpoint was one of the highlights of Buena Vista Social Club. If my conscious brain is totally absorbed by what I'm doing, I dive into the warm waters of Cabo Verde, and luxuriate in the gloriously golden sound of **Cesaria Evora** (above).

Our Choices The *BBC Music Magazine* team's current favourites

Charlotte Smith *Editor*

This month I've been revisiting ***Vaughan Williams***'s Piano Quintet of 1905. Some years ago, I sought out the Quintet to perform with my family piano quartet (plus an additional double bassist). Although we never had the opportunity to play the work in public, listening to the Munich Piano Trio's fine recording on Genuin has inspired me to dig out the sheet music again.

Jeremy Pound *Deputy editor*

From his *Concerto Gregoriano* to the *Pines of Rome*, I love how ***Respighi*** draws on ancient chant to create a distinctive sense of space and atmosphere. He's also at it in his *Church Windows*, in which we hear four imaginary depictions in stained glass, from the fierce battle fought by 'Saint Michael Archangel' to the solemn procession in 'The Matins of St Clare'. The Philharmonia's 1984 recording under Geoffrey Simon has long been a favourite of mine.

Musical loops: avant-garde composer William Basinski

Alice Pearson *Cover CD editor*

The enduring popularity of ***Grieg***'s Piano Concerto and incidental music to *Peer Gynt* can almost make the Norwegian composer seem like a two-hit wonder. A deeper exploration of his music reveals this is definitely not the case. I've been listening to Grieg's *Two Nordic Melodies*, performed by the Gothenburg Symphony under Neeme Järvi and they are so moving, particularly for lovers of folk-inspired music.

Michael Beek *Reviews editor*

Bristol Beacon (currently under reconstruction) is enjoying a blossoming partnership with the ***London Symphony Orchestra***. The pairing is a boon for us who live in the West, too, and it was a treat to go and see them at The Forum in Bath recently. Simon Rattle conducted a really varied programme, which included a barnstorming performance of Schumann's Second Symphony.

Freya Parr *Digital editor, staff writer*

I've been diving headfirst into the work ***William Basinski.*** Based on the manipulation of reel-to-reel tape loops, Basinski's music is ambient and otherworldly, but also incredibly grounding. His *Disintegration Loops* comprises recordings of gradually deteriorating tape loops, completed on the morning of the 9/11 attacks in New York.

GETTY, KAUPO KIKKAS, CHRIS GLOAG

CHANDOS
THE SOUND OF CLASSICAL

MAY RELEASES

SURROUND-SOUND HYBRID SACD

RECORDING OF THE MONTH

DORA PEJAČEVIĆ
Piano Concerto, Op. 33
Symphony, Op. 41

Peter Donohoe
BBC Symphony Orchestra
Sakari Oramo

Chandos is proud to present the world première recording of the Symphony and Piano Concerto by Dora Pejačević, with Peter Donohoe as soloist and Sakari Oramo conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

CHSA 5299

CHAN 20167

MUSICAL REMEMBRANCES
PIANO TRIOS BY RACHMANINOFF, BRAHMS, RAVEL

Neave Trio

The Neave Trio's latest album features popular piano trios by Rachmaninoff, Brahms, and Ravel, three romantic works that share the theme of remembrance.

CHAN 20233

MOZART
WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO, VOL. 1

Marina Staneva

The acclaimed young Italian pianist Federico Colli delivers the first volume of an extremely personal survey of keyboard works by Mozart.

CHAN 20174

WEINBERG
STRING QUARTETS (VOL. 2)
NOS 1, 7, AND 11

Arcadia Quartet

The Arcadia Quartet continues its survey of the quartets of Weinberg with a second instalment of three quartets, each representing a different period in the composer's stylistic development.

ALREADY AVAILABLE

SURROUND-SOUND HYBRID SACD

CHSA 5292

METAMORPHOSEN

Sinfonia of London | John Wilson

Following their critically acclaimed album *English Music for Strings*, Sinfonia of London and John Wilson turn to Austria and Germany and three outstanding works for string orchestra: Franz Schreker's *Intermezzo*, Korngold's *Symphonische Serenade*, and Richard Strauss's *Metamorphosen*.

WWW.CHANDOS.NET
[MP3 • LOSSLESS • STUDIO • SURROUND]
[SACD • CD • USB]

Spotify | Listen on MUSIC | prestomusic | EUROPADISC

STAY IN THE KNOW

Chandos Records, Chandos House, 1 Commerce Park, Commerce Way, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HX. Tel: 01206 225200

Richard Morrison

Russia's military action is further damaging its declining music scene

Faced with a country's destruction and the displacement of millions from their homeland, one feels trite talking about war's effect on culture. Theodor Adorno's famous line – 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric' – warns us against taking refuge in pleasurable artistic things while the suffering caused by atrocities is still ongoing or raw in the memory.

Nevertheless, the cultural repercussions of the conflict in Ukraine must be addressed, not least because they have had an impact on classical music in ways that have sometimes left me perplexed. I can understand that people want to express revulsion at what's being inflicted by Putin's regime. I can see why promoters and audiences in the West now wish to shun that small handful of Russian musicians who have, over many years, identified themselves as allies of Putin – such figures as the conductor Valery Gergiev, pianist Denis Matsuev and soprano Anna Netrebko. Similarly, I accept that ensembles closely associated with the Russian state – such as the Bolshoi Ballet, which was due to perform in London this summer – should be told they are unwelcome, even if the dancers themselves are blameless and quite possibly secret Putin haters.

What I find more questionable are calls for a blanket ban on all things Russian, including performers who have bravely issued condemnations of the invasion, and, farcically, the music of Tchaikovsky and Musorgsky. Isn't it Russia that's the intolerant society?

That said, I can't see how it will be possible to normalise the exchange of musicians between the West and Russia for years to come. And it won't primarily be the West that loses from that. It will be another nail in the coffin of Russian creativity. Another nail? Well, consider this. For half a century Russian musical life has been drifting into a backwater. The glorious succession of great Russian composers has come to a shuddering halt. It began with Glinka in the early 19th century and continued with the fervent nationalist music of 'The Five' and the more cosmopolitan masterpieces of Tchaikovsky and Scriabin. It was maintained throughout the Soviet era – bravely, in the face of horrible political pressures – by Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Ustvolskaya and Khachaturian, while outside the country such émigré geniuses as Rachmaninov and Stravinsky drew constantly on their Russian roots for inspiration.

> Russian creative artists have lost the ability to connect with the deepest pangs of the Russian soul

But since Shostakovich's death in 1975, who? Rodion Shchedrin and Alfred Schnittke have their admirers; I'm not among them. And there are a few younger Russian composers (some settled in the UK) who write well-crafted music. None, however, has made an international impact to match the leading American, Finnish, British or German composers.

Then look at those once-great Russian musical institutions. The Bolshoi Opera in Moscow and the Mariinsky Opera in St Petersburg still produce amazing voices, no question, but their repertoire is governed far too much by what tourists want to see (or at least it was until pandemic and war clobbered the tourist trade), and their lumbering productions often look like hand-me-downs from Tsarist days. Much the same can be said about the repertoire of Russia's leading orchestras. The country's conservatories still turn out formidable string players and pianists, but the ambitious ones get out of Russia as soon as they can.

Why has this decline happened? Three things: repression, commercialisation and dysfunction. Repression has always been a facet of Russian life, but at least in Soviet times it gave creative artists an angry hidden agenda for their work. As far as I can see, that hasn't happened in Putin's Russia. Commercialisation has damaged the integrity of many top Russian musical institutions, making them reliant on dodgy oligarchs and corporations for funding. And by dysfunction I mean that somehow Russian creative artists have lost the ability to connect with the deepest pangs of the Russian soul – something that united all the great composers mentioned above.

Isolation will make this petrified inertia a lot worse. Since the bad old 1970s I've visited Russia many times and got to know many wonderful musicians there. I feel sorry for them now, and for the Russian public – which loves classical music with a unique intensity, but won't get to hear foreign performers for the foreseeable future. It can't be helped. The Russian state started this war. Russians can stop it. Until they do, every aspect of Russian life, including the arts, must feel the pain.

Richard Morrison is chief music critic and a columnist of The Times

The Passionate Pilgrim

Stephen Johnson traces Vaughan Williams's spiritual journey through ten great masterpieces which remain profoundly pertinent to our time

To be writing about Ralph Vaughan Williams feels particularly apt now, not simply because it's his anniversary year, but because throughout his long life, the composer struggled to make sense of the very kind of mysteries and horrors that assail many of us right now. To those who know him only from such evergreen favourites as *The Lark Ascending* and the *Tallis Fantasia* that may seem a bewildering overstatement. But Vaughan Williams's overall achievement is so much richer and more challenging than those two beautiful pieces alone could possibly suggest.

Yes, his upbringing was privileged – sheltered upper class home, education at exclusive Charterhouse School, Cambridge and the Royal College of Music – but his left-leaning politics brought him into contact with the dark side of modern urban existence, and his extensive folksong researches profoundly enhanced his admiration for the art of ordinary people. Later, his traumatic experience as a medical orderly in the trenches in the First World War was to cast a colossal shadow over many of his major works.

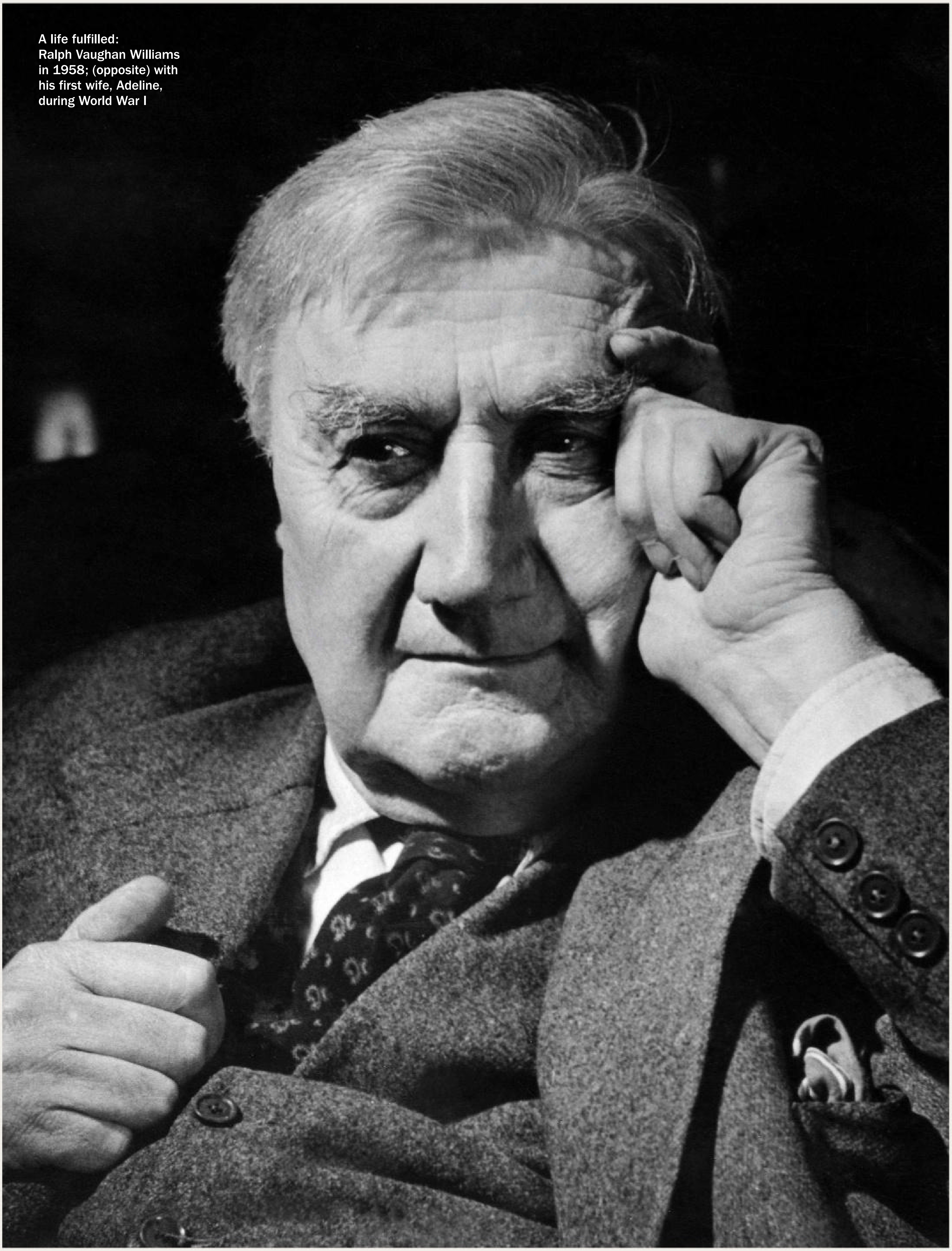
His 'answer' – if that's what it may be called – was to go on searching, endlessly, right through to his last major work, the Ninth Symphony, completed in his 85th year. Like John Bunyan's Pilgrim (subject of his operatic 'morality' *The Pilgrim's Progress,* see p38), he strove constantly towards the light, however faint – if not altogether absent – it may have seemed at times, and wrestled with a whole cast of physical and mental demons in the spirit of what his colleague Steuart Wilson called 'Christian Agnosticism'. At the same time, he reached out to ordinary people, creating and conducting amateur choirs, arranging sing-alongs for his beleaguered fellow soldiers and doing all he could to support budding talent in his native country, irrespective of class, gender or ethnic background. And if the idea of an omnipotent loving God seemed impossible to square with what he witnessed, in the end there was still music. Ultimately, Vaughan Williams might well have endorsed the brief credo of the musician and Holocaust-survivor Alice Herz-Sommer: 'Music – is God'.

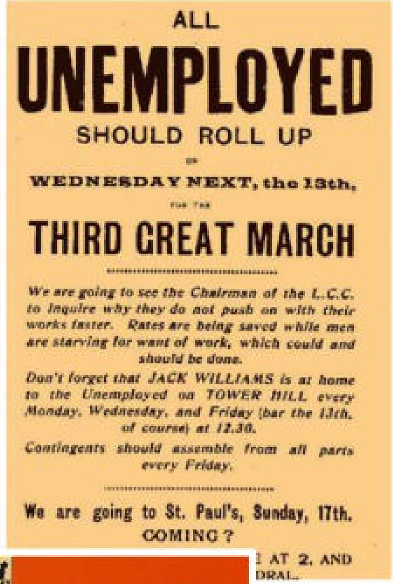
GETTY

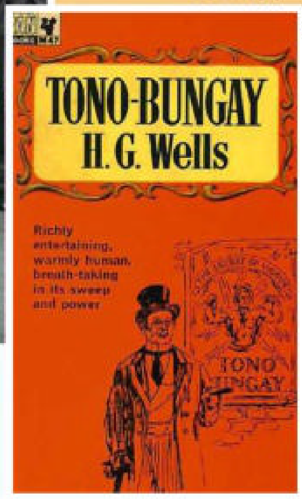
His experience during World War I cast a shadow over many of his works

A London Symphony (Symphony No. 2) *1911-13*

Given Vaughan Williams's lifelong doubts about Mahler (though he studied him more seriously than did many of his English contemporaries), it's striking how Mahlerian Vaughan Williams's conception of the symphony is here. For Mahler the symphony should 'embrace everything', and in his *London Symphony* Vaughan Williams presents an astonishing collage of sounds and impressions from his home city – street-vendors' cries, tavern music (including mouth-organs), the kaleidoscopic bustle of busy streets and, framing it all, the eternal ebb and flow of the city's great river. At the same time, it's a triumph of symphonic engineering. What we're listening to


A life fulfilled: Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1958; (opposite) with his first wife, Adeline, during World War I





Hidden social comment: Vaughan Williams drew a parallel between his *London Symphony* and HG Wells's novel *Tono-Bungay* (left), which describes a hunger march on London

isn't pre-eminently an illustrative tone-poem, still less the score for a documentary about city life. There's a current here, like that of the River Thames itself, which not only carries us through, but juxtaposes the sound images in a way that challenges us (as in Mahler) to seek out deeper meanings.

What those meanings might be are less certain, as so often Vaughan Williams provided only slender hints, but he did make a significant comparison between the symphony's ending and that of HG Wells's novel *Tono-Bungay*: 'The river passes – London passes, England passes...' What Vaughan Williams doesn't tell us is that the novel's hero is sailing away in a modern destroyer, and that his last look back at the Imperial capital is (like that of the socialist Wells) a very jaundiced one. What Wells himself calls 'the last great movement in the London Symphony' contains a grim depiction of a hunger march. The increasingly tragic march in Vaughan Williams's finale is surely his response to that. Vaughan Williams's London is life itself, in all its glory, and all its terrible pain and sadness.

A Pastoral Symphony (Symphony No. 3) *1916-21*

A London Symphony is poised on the brink of war; its successor, the *Pastoral*, gives us Vaughan Williams's response to the catastrophe itself, but expressed in a uniquely indirect way. 'It's not really lambkins frisking,' Vaughan Williams later remarked. 'It's really war-time music – a great deal of it incubated when I used to go up night after night with the ambulance wagon at Écoivres and we went up a steep hill and there was a wonderful Corot-like landscape in the sunset.'

What's most striking about that account is what it leaves out. Serving with a field ambulance was not for the physically or emotionally squeamish. Often there was literally blood up the walls, and

> Vaughan Williams's London is life itself, in all its glory, and all its terrible pain

the screams from the wounded soldiers every time the wagon went over a bump were excruciating. On the surface, *A Pastoral Symphony* is an exceptionally beautiful score: we can imagine ourselves gazing with Vaughan Williams at that gorgeous twilit 'Corot-like' landscape. But the sumptuous scoring and sweetly folk-inflected melodies mask some surprisingly harsh, unresolved dissonances. While we drink in, gratefully, the beauty of the countryside, we are made subtly aware of what we have turned our backs on – not just in those disquieting dissonances, but in the ghostly echo of a young bugler failing to reach the top note of the *Last Post* in the second movement; and Wagnerians may catch echoes of the music that introduces the mortally wounded hero in *Tristan and Isolde*. While some listeners are apparently able to enjoy the pastoralism on its own terms, for others this is music about traumatic dissociation, only turning to grief at its final climax. Is there any other work in the repertory which captures that painfully ambiguous state of mind with such eerie power?

Sancta Civitas (The Holy City) *1923-5*

Sancta Civitas was Vaughan Williams's favourite among his choral works – and what a favourite! If *A Pastoral Symphony* expresses grief and desolation obliquely, this is pure head-on catharsis, with an extra helping of rage. The words are from the *Book of Revelation* – that favourite of millennialist fanatics and prophets of gory doom throughout the Christian ages. Vaughan Williams uses the language of the Authorised Version of the Bible, with additions from earlier English translations, and the supercharged nightmare ecstasies of St John, along with the grisly descriptions of battle and its aftermath ('all the fowls were filled with their flesh') elicited some of his most vivid word-setting. The symphonic sweep of it all is electrifying, from the steady, half-appalled crescendo of John's opening words, through sound, fury and luscious lament, to the awe-inspiring climactic vision of God enthroned – or is this a pre-echo of the climax of *Job*, with Satan sitting in ghastly splendour in God's place?

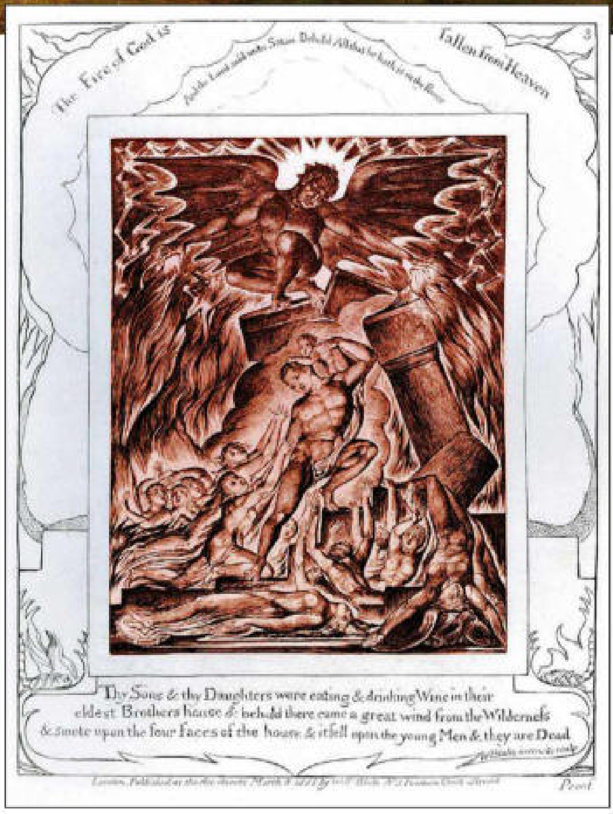
But perhaps the most telling moment is the ending: the briefest of tenor solos, then the chorus's hushed 'Even so come Lord'. Words and music reach out tentatively to the possibility of something beyond the horror of apocalyptic warfare. There's another half-hidden clue in the score: a quotation from Plato (but only in the

Haunting visions: *A Pastoral Symphony* recalls the twilit world depicted by Corot in *Landscape with Lake and Boatman*; (below) William Blake's illustrations inspired *Job: A Masque for Dancing*

original Greek). The philosopher, having attempted a sketch of a possible afterlife, then adds, 'A man of sense will not insist that things are as I have described them. But I think he will believe that something of the kind is true... and that it is worthwhile to stake everything on this belief.'

Job: A Masque for Dancing
(1927-30)

But the question lingers: what kind of 'God' could permit, even engineer, such suffering? The biblical *Book of Job* tells of the torment inflicted on a just man as a trial of his faith. When Job apparently fails the test, God appears in a whirlwind and gives the classic parental response of 'Because I say so!'. For the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, *Job* was a beautiful lesson in keeping the faith, however 'absurd' it may seem; for the psychologist Carl Jung it looked a lot more like bullying. In his wonderful illustrations to *Job*, William Blake took a defiantly unorthodox view: which is God and which the Devil? Or are these (as he put it elsewhere) 'the two contrary states of the human soul'? It was to this Blake that Vaughan Williams, scholar Geoffrey Keynes, choreographer Ninette de Valois



and designer Gwendolen Raverat turned in creating the first all-British ballet.

Comparing the orchestral tone-palette of *Job* to that of *Sancta Civitas* gives the lie to the notion that there is a typical Vaughan Williams 'sound'. Where *Sancta Civitas* can be brazen, bare, primitive even, *Job* is often subtle, velvet- or pearl-hued, sometimes more opulent – though at the other extreme there's the thunderous organ-enhanced climax where Job, having cursed the day he was born, looks heavenward and sees Satan on God's throne. Significantly, the ballet omits God's 'answer' (mind you, how do you dance a sermon?), but the exquisite dance for the beautiful youth Elihu seems to offer something else: a tender, loving comfort that may not provide a rational answer – but a musical one? Despite moments of grandeur, terror (Job's vision), even sarcasm (alto saxophone imitating the oleaginous piety of Job's 'comforters'), the quiet humanity of the music associated with Job himself survives everything. *Job* has never been one of Vaughan Williams's most popular works, but for many of those who know him well, it's his masterpiece.

Symphony No. 4 in F minor
(1931-34)

It's as though Vaughan Williams now says, 'Right! Enough with paradoxes, nuances, ambiguities', and opts instead for out-and-out violent purgation. Nearly a century after it was first performed, the Fourth Symphony can still stun people who know this composer only from the *Lark* and *Tallis Fantasia*. It is a fiercely concentrated outpouring of volcanic rage. The veiled dissonances of the *Pastoral Symphony* are now flung out like heavy artillery fire,

GETTY, ALAMY

Celebrating RVW: Ryan Wigglesworth conducts the ferocious Fourth; (below) soprano Sophie Bevan is a soloist in *A Sea Symphony*

Life-changing encounters: (right) Ralph with Ursula, a major inspiration in his later years; (far right) the Tudor composers Thomas Tallis and William Byrd, whose work influenced RVW's own

in some of the most acerbic orchestral colours Vaughan Williams ever created (no harps, no wistful solo violins). 'I don't know if I like it, but it's what I meant,' was his most famous verdict; but a letter to a friend points in another direction: '...when you say you do not think my F mi[nor] symph. beautiful my answer must be that I do think it beautiful – not that I did not mean it to be beautiful because it reflects unbeautiful times – because we know that beauty can come from unbeautiful things.'

Reflection of 'unbeautiful times' can certainly be made out in this symphony, especially in the black parody of the darkness-to-light scherzo-finale transition of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in Vaughan Williams's own third and fourth movements – iconic German visions of 'triumph' would have had uncomfortable resonances in the UK in the 1930s. Is Vaughan Williams following Hamlet and holding a mirror up to nature? Was he horrified to see humanity on the brink of repeating the same catastrophic mistake all over again? Or is there something more private here? The scholar Jerrold Northrop Moore has suggested that the pent-up frustrations of Vaughan Williams's difficult first marriage may have had a lot to do with it. Whatever, it's a thrilling experience, especially in the composer's own breathtakingly wild recording. It has to be significant that this is the only one of his symphonies Vaughan Williams consented to record commercially.

Serenade to Music *(1938)*

After the firestorm of the Fourth Symphony and the direct war imagery of the cantata *Dona nobis pacem* ('Grant us peace', 1936) comes something so different it could be from another world. Shakespeare's gorgeous hymn to music from the final act of *The Merchant of Venice* is set for the highly unusual forces of 16 vocal soloists and modest orchestra. Vaughan Williams did provide a full choral version, but there's something about the intimacy of the original sound that makes this beautiful fusion of music and musical words especially telling. Apparently, *Serenade to Music* reduced Rachmaninov to tears when he heard its first performance in 1938. (He'd been playing in the concert's first half.) The

Five of the best

Performances around the UK

Toward the Unknown Region – RVW 150

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, 26 February-12 May **www.halle.co.uk/rvw150**

The Hallé and the BBC Philharmonic join forces for a complete Vaughan Williams Symphony Cycle in Manchester. The BBC Phil concerts have already taken place, but three Hallé performances remain: on 21 April John Wilson conducts the Ninth Symphony alongside Holst's *The Planets*; on 30 April Mark Elder conducts *A Sea Symphony* alongside Symphony No. 6; and on 12 May Elder returns to the podium to conduct the Eighth Symphony.

A Sea Symphony

Barbican, London, 3 May **cityoflondonchoir.org**
Cadogan Hall, London, 21 May **cadoganhall.com**

Two outings for this formidable work: at the Barbican, the City of London Choir joins the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and soloists Sophie Bevan and Roderick Williams under Hilary Davan Wetton on 3 May (the concert includes *Norfolk Rhapsody* No. 1 and the *Fantasia on the Old 104th Psalm Tune*); and at Cadogan Hall the Constanza Chorus joins the London Mozart Players and soloists Eleanor Dennis and Matthew Brook under conductor Joanna Tomlinson on 21 May.

The Other Vaughan Williams

Barbican, London, 13 May
www.bbc.co.uk/events/enrp8g
Newbury Spring Festival, 14 May
www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk

Ryan Wigglesworth takes to London's Barbican and the Newbury Spring Festival to conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra in Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony.

The Ballets

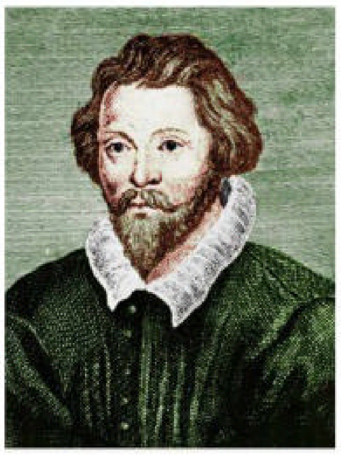
Dorchester Abbey, 27 May
englishmusicfestival.org.uk
Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, 31 May
liverpoolphil.com

Chances to hear Vaughan Williams's rarely-heard ballets: the BBC Concert Orchestra performs *Old King Cole* at the English Music Festival in Dorchester conducted by Martin Yates; and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrew Manze performs *Job*.

Festivals celebrating Vaughan Williams

Various locations, Spring and Summer 2022
iimf.co.uk; englishmusicfestival.org.uk; nnfestival.org.uk; kingslynnfestival.org.uk; 3choirs.org; ldsm.org.uk

Check out the Investec International Music Festival; English Music Festival; Norfolk and Norwich Festival; King's Lynn Festival; Three Choirs Festival; and Lake District Summer Music Festival.



quality of some of the orchestral writing in *Job* – to borrow a phrase from Debussy, 'lit up from within' – is rediscovered here, yet there's none of the pain of *Job*. 'Such harmony is in immortal souls' sing the massed voices at the height of one of the *Serenade*'s most gorgeous swelling waves; and for at least that moment we may sense that Vaughan Williams really believes it – including the 'immortal' bit.

Ultimately the *Serenade* speaks for itself; but it's worth bearing in mind that in 1938 Vaughan Williams also met the woman who would change his life, the poet Ursula Wood, née Lock, with whom he began a lifelong and profoundly fulfilling relationship. The *Merchant of Venice* text Vaughan Williams chose to set is part of a tender, playful love scene. A coincidence, perhaps, but if so, a lovely one.

GETTY, ALAMY, MARCO BORGGREVE, SUSSIE AHLBURG

Vaughan Williams seems to have decided the time for catharsis was over

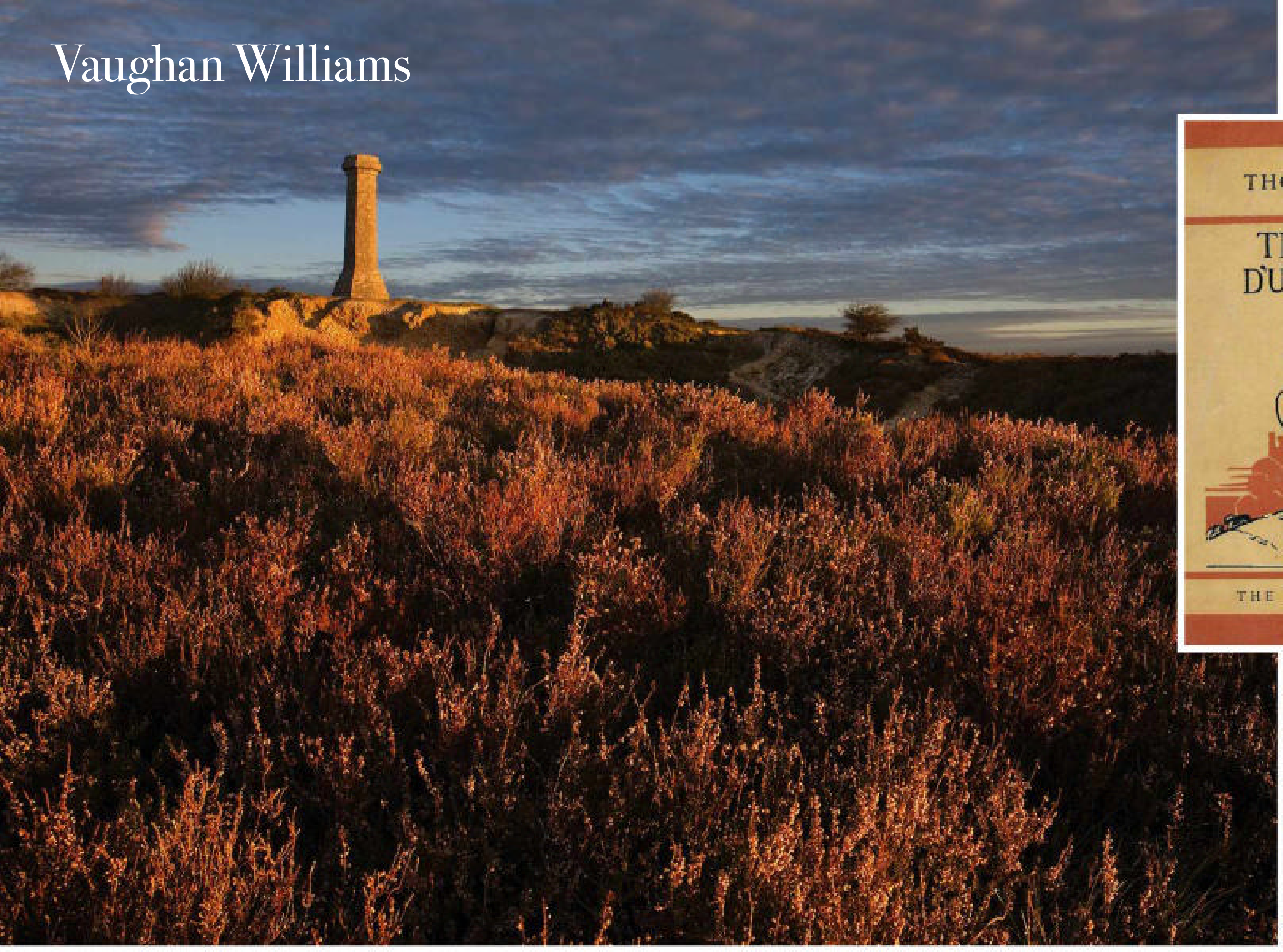
Symphony No. 5 in D major
(1938-43)

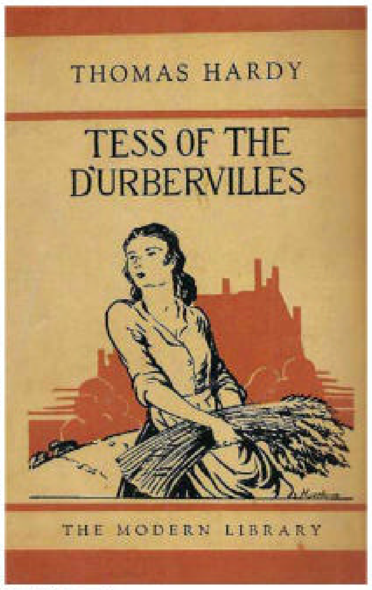
Begun the same year as the *Serenade to Music*, the Fifth Symphony does have its shadowy moments, but in its glimpses of serenity it transcends anything Vaughan Williams had composed before. It was written mostly during World War II and, whether consciously or not, Vaughan Williams seems to have decided that the time for intense catharsis was over. Where *Dona nobis pacem* prayed for peace, the Fifth Symphony ultimately offers it, in an exquisite orchestral evocation of the luminous choral polyphony of the Tudor masters Thomas Tallis and William Byrd.

This is all the more striking in that the symphony begins with a musical question: 'What key am I in?' The hushed horn calls are pure D major, but the C natural in the bass gently undermines that. The whole symphony can be seen as a beautifully sustained working through ambiguity to a quiet certainty, captured in music whose symbolic import is as unmistakable as that of a sunset-illuminated crucifix on a cathedral rood screen. Quotations and allusions to Vaughan Williams's major operatic project, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and a memory of the climactic 'Alleluia!' from Vaughan his still-popular hymn *Sine nomine* ('For all the saints') underline the feeling that faith has been rediscovered, in some form or other. But a reference in that final 'choral' vision to the unclassifiable *Flos Campi* ('Flower of the Fields', 1925) for viola, wordless chorus and small orchestra, points us to the biblical words, 'Set me as a seal upon thine heart' – pure erotic love poetry. This time the connection with Ursula is quite clear.

Symphony No. 6 in E minor
(1944-47)

But the pilgrimage was not at an end. Vaughan Williams had to go on searching, even though he was now well into his seventies. And the symphony he began almost immediately after finishing No. 5 takes us into radically new territory. Like the Fifth, it begins with a 'What key am I in?' question, but now the clash – F minor against E minor – is jarring, and from it emerges a seamless musical argument that matches Symphony No. 4 in turbulence and ultimately outdoes it in desolation. The last movement is marked 'always *pp* and without crescendo' – in other





Final thoughts: the Dorset monument to Thomas Hardy, the spirit of whose *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* infuses RVW's Ninth; (below) RVW with Philip Catelinet, who premiered his Tuba Concerto

words, more or less expressionless. Ghostly fragments of themes float past (the sense of emotional 'dissociation' is even stronger than in the *Pastoral*), until at the end the 'what key?' question is sort of answered, but not really. Vaughan Williams was apparently delighted when a friend described this music as 'the agnostic's Paradisum'. What has happened to the affirmation of faith at the end of No. 5?

One possible answer was that Vaughan Williams was now able to look back on the second catastrophic war of his lifetime and ponder its import. Echoes of the militaristic 'Beat! beat! drums!' rhythm from *Dona nobis pacem* and an acknowledged response to the death of a jazz musician in the London Blitz (his tenor saxophone haunts the third movement) led some to call this a 'World War II symphony'. Vaughan Williams responded angrily: 'It never seems to occur to people that a man might want to write just a piece of music.' (He may be yelling something like that at me, right now.) But perhaps the problem was that the commentators were too specific. Was it a 'second' world war, or a continuation of the first – or just eternal human destructiveness breaking out again? Whatever, the Sixth Symphony, magnificent as it is, ultimately has nothing even approaching reassuring certainty to offer.

Tuba Concerto in F minor *(1954)*

Vaughan Williams wrote four solo concertos. Fine as they all are, there is something special about the Tuba Concerto. Vaughan Williams takes pity on the instrument derided by conductor Thomas Beecham as 'the very lower bowel of the orchestra', and he provides it with something so glorious that tuba players all over the world have thanked him ever since.

Yes, there is some familiar gruff Falstaffian japery in the outer movements, and the final pay-off has a touch of the scatological. But the heart of the concerto is the wonderful slow movement, in which the hippo of the orchestral zoo is allowed to pour out his soul in an aria that's as touching in its very different way as anything in *The Lark Ascending*. It would have been typical of Vaughan Williams, in writing an orchestral display piece, to side with the underdog, and in the process show himself at his most likeable.

GETTY, BRIDGEMAN

Symphony No. 9 in E minor *(1956-57)*

Even in his mid-eighties, Vaughan Williams goes on exploring, expanding his orchestra in this work to include flugelhorn and three saxophones, and taking his harmonic thinking into new regions. (The slow movement may use common chords, but is it really 'tonal' at all?) Vaughan Williams revealed privately that he'd originally been thinking of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, and some have heard Hardyish landscapes in parts of this score, especially the mysterious, sullen Egdon Heath, which 30 years earlier had inspired an eerie masterpiece from his closest male friend, Gustav Holst. The novel is also famous for the grimness of its ending: '"Justice" was done, and the President of the Immortals, in the Aeschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess.'

And what a grim ending something like that might have made to Vaughan Williams's own pilgrimage. Instead something truly – to use that much-overused word – 'visionary' happens. From the heavy, toiling *fortissimo* at the end of the finale a dazzling chord of E major suddenly bursts out, *fff*, from the full orchestra – except, that is, for the saxophones. It's as stunning in its way as the hushed G major chord that opens and haunts the *Tallis Fantasia*. Twice the chord dies down, then swells again, as saxophones challenge its radiant purity with glaring dissonances. Then the chord alone is left, with up-down glissando harps, fading to nothing. It's as vivid a depiction of faith and doubt, light and shadow, as anything in Vaughan Williams's huge output. But in the end, it would appear, the turn is to the light.

FW SO FORT WORTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
ROBERT SPANO, MUSIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE
KEVIN JOHN EDUSEI, PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR DESIGNATE
KEITH CERNY, Ph.D., PRESIDENT AND CEO

Robert Spano conducts the orchestra; (below) Spano with Mercedes Bass; (below left) CEO and president Keith Cerny; (below right) conductor Kevin John Edusei

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra

The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra (FWSO) is one of two international-calibre orchestras in the 7.6 million strong Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The FWSO entered a new area in 2019 when renowned board chairman Mrs Mercedes T. Bass hired performing arts industry veteran Keith Cerny Ph.D. as president and CEO. Since then, the organisation has begun a period of sustained growth in artistic quality and operational excellence.

Each season, the FWSO presents 200 concerts per year, reaching around 200,000 patrons, through its main Symphonic and Pops series, its extensive education programme to underserved students, and its summer festival, *Concerts in the Garden*. In September 2020, it was one of the first US orchestras to resume live performances during the pandemic by a socially distanced orchestra to socially distanced audiences. Financially, the FWSO has remained very strong through the first two COVID-19 years. Thanks to intensive fund-raising and generous government support, the FWSO achieved essentially balanced budgets across these two years, continuing to pay musicians and staff in full – one of the few US orchestras to do so.

KAREN ALMOND, MARCO BORGGREVE

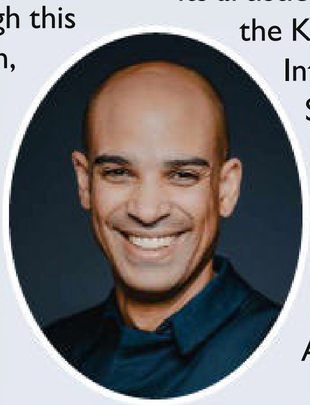
Artistic Excellence

In February 2021, the FWSO appointed acclaimed American conductor Robert Spano as music director and, following his appointment, hired ten tenure track musicians. It has collaborated through this process with the Sphinx organisation, which provides coaching and support to talented Black and Latinx artists aspiring to have a successful performing career.

In December 2021, the FWSO appointed the German Kevin John Edusei as principal guest conductor, following his highly successful debut in September 2021. He brings an impressive network of contacts and deep experience from his performances in the UK, Germany and elsewhere in Europe. The FWSO has also engaged distinguished guest conductors including Henrik Nánási, Dame Jane Glover, Carlo Montanaro and Edo de Waart.

Creativity and Collaboration

Maestro Spano and Dr. Cerny announced a bold new artistic vision including 'theater of a concert' projects which incorporate additional elements such as dance, projections, video and puppetry into live symphonic performances; performances with extraordinary opera and oratorio singers; an ambitious chamber music series; regular world premieres; and international guest conductors and soloists. It has also expanded its artistic partnerships, which now include the Kimbell Art Museum, Cliburn International Piano Competition, Seraphic Fire and many others.



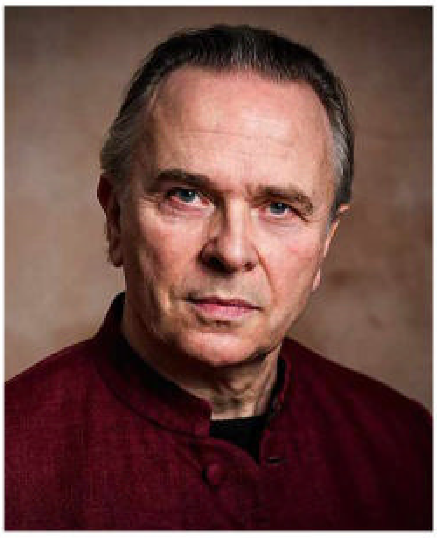
While much has changed about the FWSO in recent years, it remains deeply committed to engaging young people to foster an interest and lifelong enjoyment. After all, life is better with music!

For more information about Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, visit **fwsymphony.org**

Take it from the top: Vaughan Williams conducts a Hallé rehearsal, 1956; (far right) poet Walt Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* inspired *A Sea Symphony;* (bottom left) Sir Mark Elder and Sir Antonio Pappano

Views from the podium

Sir Mark Elder and Sir Antonio Pappano sit down with Andrew Green to share their experiences and insights from conducting Vaughan Williams's symphonic works



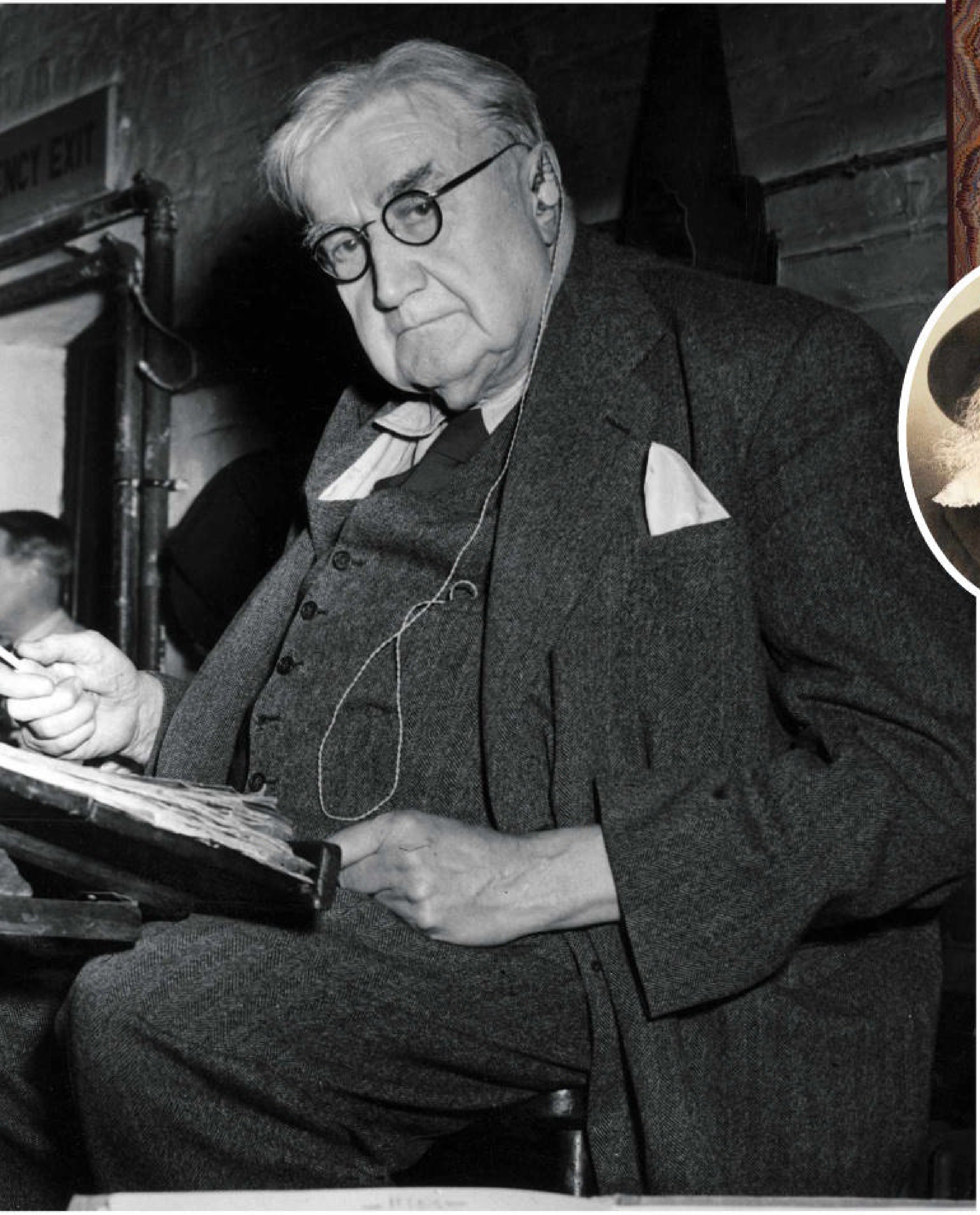
'In my view, Vaughan Williams is unquestionably one of the great symphonists of the 20th century,' says Sir Mark Elder. 'I mean, really important. I would put his symphonies absolutely alongside those of Sibelius and Shostakovich.'

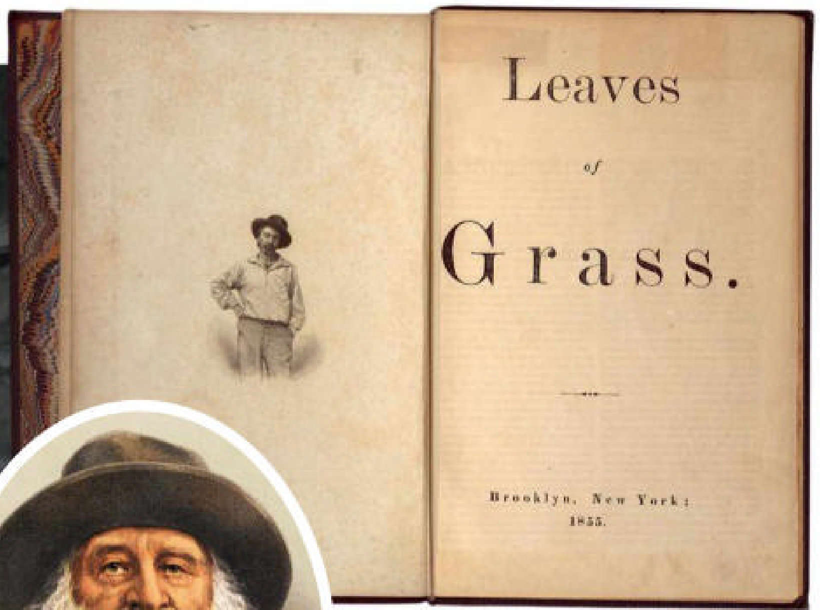
Elder's journey through these works has been supplemented by many other explorations of the Vaughan Williams canon. Sir Antonio Pappano's probings are still in the early stages, but his experience of conducting Symphonies Nos 4, 5 and 6 has him deeply intrigued by the composer's elusive character. 'I'm shocked, surprised and in awe,' he says. 'It's really important music with a colour all its own. And yet the man who comes across is so contradictory. Vaughan Williams was at least two people. You contrast the Fifth Symphony with the Fourth and Sixth – it's Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Tranquility versus a violence that's expressed with such punch and dissonance, in the Fourth Symphony especially. It's almost frightening.'

'There was so much to his musical character,' adds Elder. 'Vaughan Williams had a zest for life. He was lusty – the *Five Tudor Portraits* are really something in that regard. Then you have the mysticism and austerity of a work like *Sancta Civitas*. The finale of *A Sea Symphony* is a huge poetic example of his burgeoning mysticism, rooted in those words of Walt Whitman.'

How, then, do the two musical knights judge the 'Britishness' of Vaughan Williams's output? On the one hand, says Elder, the composer's close identification with English folk song seeped into his music's DNA . 'And yet I don't see these symphonies as being particularly "British" apart from that… I enjoy programming them alongside European music.'

Pappano ponders the idea of some of the orchestral writing connecting with the British church music tradition to which Vaughan Williams contributed so fulsomely. An examination of the composer's self-annotated score of the Fifth Symphony provided a flash of





GETTY, MUSACCHIO & IANNIELLO

illumination. 'Over a particular radiant passage, Vaughan Williams had written the word "Alleluia". I was struck with incredible nostalgia for the religious music I knew in my schooldays – the sense of occasion it gave. It was part of growing up in England.'

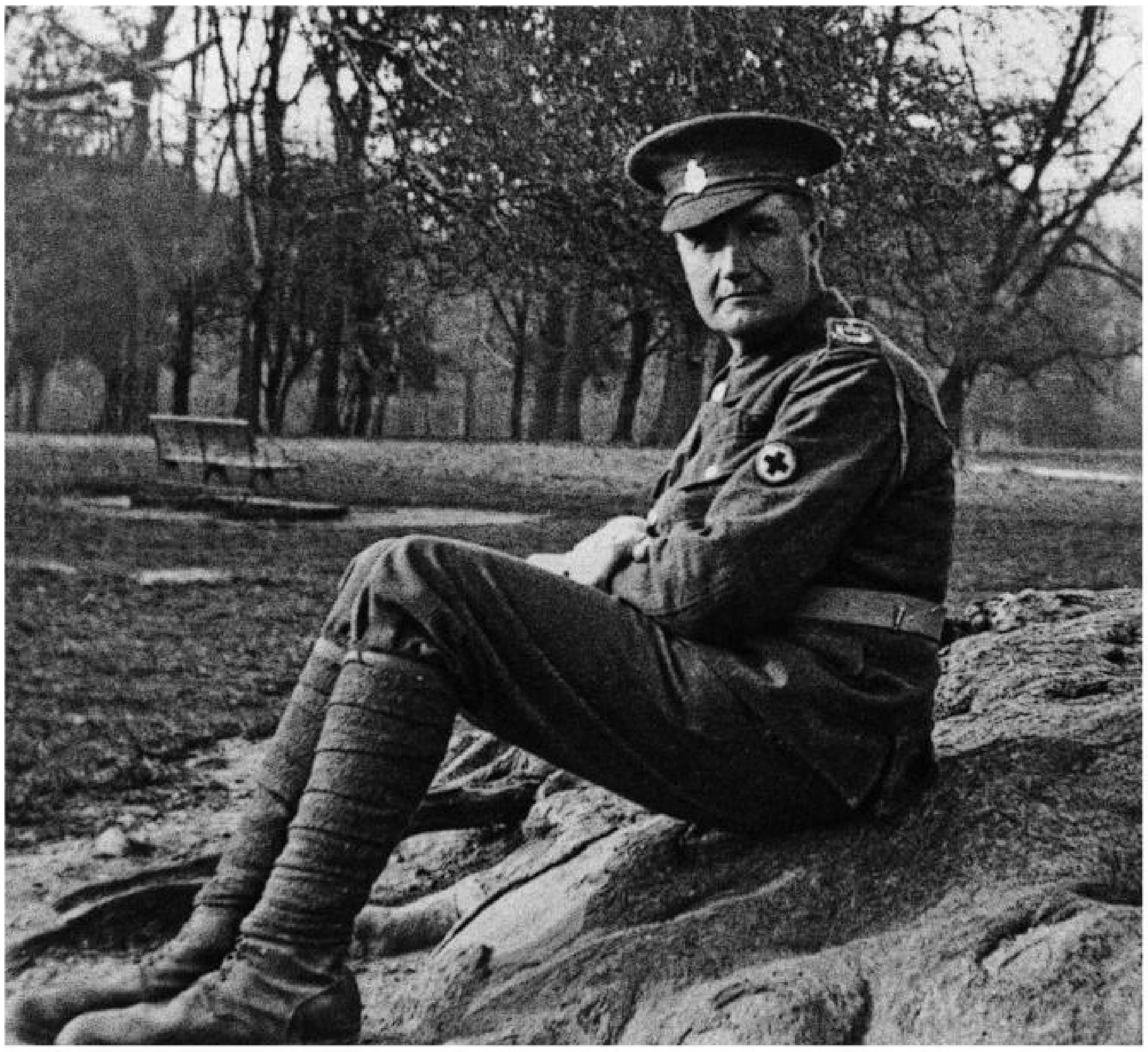
The conversation turns to assessing how well Vaughan Williams's music travels to foreign parts. Elder's experience is that a certain corpus of works is 'constantly appreciated and accepted without question as being strong and moving. There's *A Sea Symphony*, first and foremost, beloved of large amateur choirs in the USA, for example. Then works like *The Lark Ascending*, of course, and the *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. But I've also introduced foreign orchestras to less obviously accessible works. When I conducted the *Pastoral Symphony* in Washington DC, the players and audience were very struck by it. More recently I conducted it with a Finnish orchestra. The players had no knowledge of it at all, but were really taken with it, really moved. In some ways it's easier to conduct Vaughan Williams abroad, where people have no expectations or prejudices.'

Vaughan Williams just about owned up to the scarcely surprising notion that influences played upon his mind while composing, but didn't think the public should be let in on such secrets. Music was just music, more attuned to conveying emotion than imagery, personal biography or 'meaning'. Pappano questions that rationale, approaching things from the perspective of those Fourth and Sixth Symphonies, written on either side of World War II. 'As human beings, let alone as musicians, our psychological development and the baggage we carry will inevitably be a mirror of the times we live through. This surely must be the case with Vaughan Williams's music. However, the problem is that we have no common point of reference with what people of his generation experienced in terms of struggle, conflict and world war.'

From Elder's perspective, appreciating the Great War background to the *Pastoral Symphony* – only fleetingly acknowledged by the composer – isn't merely interesting. It informs the way he carries out his job. 'The symphony captures something of what Vaughan Williams saw of the desecration of the landscape in Northern France during his Great War service. Being aware of this affects the way I conduct it. My imagination is awakened to the possibilities of the colours in the music... this man trying to find beauty in the midst of such horror. There's the deep, deep sadness in the second movement, for example... the sadness of loss, the sadness of an emptiness into which the sound of the solo natural trumpet breaks. So evocative and haunting.'

The discussion ranges across the symphonies with self-evidently descriptive wellsprings – *A Sea Symphony*, *A London Symphony* and the

> 'In some ways it's easier to conduct Vaughan Williams abroad, where people have no expectations or prejudices'



Inspired by horror and immensity: (left) RVW as a medical orderly in World War I, a time he recalled in *A Pastoral Symphony*; (below) poster for the 1948 film *Scott of the Antarctic*, for which he wrote the soundtrack

Sinfonia antartica, the last rooted in Vaughan Williams's score for the 1948 movie, *Scott of the Antarctic*. 'Not really a symphony,' judges Elder of *Sinfonia antartica*. 'But as music which describes these vast, open, freezing spaces it's a brilliant response to specific images. Above all, the music conveys a sense of space and timelessness, stillness and coldness.'

However, when considering the remainder of the symphonies, enigmas await at many a turn. No help – of course – from Vaughan Williams in understanding what inspired that 1947 Sixth Symphony, surely haunted by the Second World War. Its hushed *Epilogue* is a symphonic movement like no other, apparently inhabited by utter despair. 'What is it?', asks Pappano. 'Something so tense and empty. It's extremely difficult to negotiate, the musicians having to play so softly throughout, not romanticising the music when probably every bone in everyone's body wants to shape a phrase in a certain way to give satisfaction. Not humanising the music creates a tortuous experience for the listener.'

Elder and Pappano are agreed that the greatest enigma of all is the last of the symphonies, No. 9, premiered in the year of Vaughan Williams's death, 1958. 'Unquestionably the most elusive and hardest to understand of the symphonies,' is Elder's verdict. 'But as often happens, you stand in front of the orchestra and the sounds the players make inspire you. A really remarkable symphony...a deeply personal work. The moods Vaughan Williams creates are extremely profound. Is he attempting to answer questions posed by the desolation of that last movement of Symphony No. 6?'

> 'Often with Vaughan Williams, you stand in front of the orchestra and the sounds the players make inspire you'

Vaughan Williams was content to leave the enigmas unelucidated. He'd have been more than happy to observe the talk shifting to safer ground: the requirements of conducting his music. This, says Pappano, has to start with your demeanour on the podium. 'You have to be a disciple to conduct every composer's music to some extent, of course, but especially so with Vaughan Williams. There has to be a kind of messianic thing going on... you have to fight to establish the importance of the music with the players. An orchestra reacts as much to the conductor's fervour as it does to the musical material itself.'

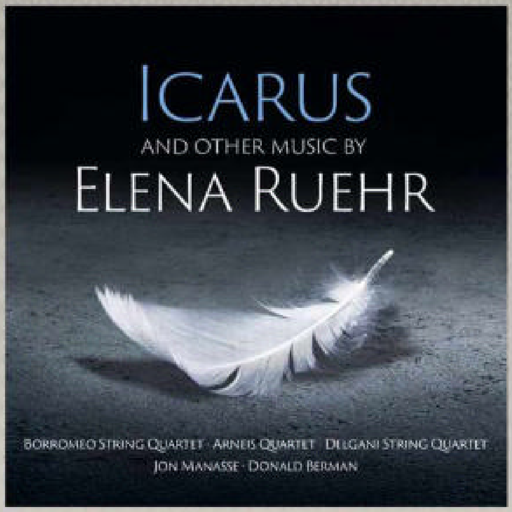
The challenges presented by Vaughan Williams's music don't relate simply to matters of compositional complexity, Pappano observes. Take the Fifth Symphony – a work that looks and sounds deceptively straightforward. 'When I conducted it with students at the Royal College of Music, I told them: "OK, you can sightread this as far as the notes are concerned, but this 4/4 bar here, for example, needs all the musicianship you've built up over your years of study. It requires you to listen. It requires all your sensitivity." Then you have the challenge of the Fourth Symphony. Totally different. What surprises players, first of all, is how technically difficult it is. All of a sudden everybody has to sit up and take a look at this thing. The elemental forces at work are extraordinary and daunting.'

'In my experience, you tamper with these scores at your peril,' adds Elder. 'The instructions you're given on the page are what you must do devotedly, simply and, if you like, classically. There should be no interpretative "tics". As with Shostakovich, his music needs absolute clarity. When as conductors we don't provide this, we fail him.'

What, though, of suggestions that conductors can be hampered at times by Vaughan Williams's uneven command of orchestration and lack of textural refinement? 'Occasionally there's an amateurish quality about the way he writes,' Elder agrees, 'but I see this as being conscious and not an indication of his failings. He developed his awareness of the orchestra in order to find a sound that his music needed. *Job: A Masque for Dancing*, for example, is a masterpiece at the very highest level. OK, slightly irritatingly, there's that familiar resort to piling up one triad after another. But this is still the work of a great composer, a lone voice in 20th century music. I'd love to have met him.'

2002-2022 AVIE

NEW RELEASES FROM AVIE RECORDS



AV2502 | CD & DIGITAL

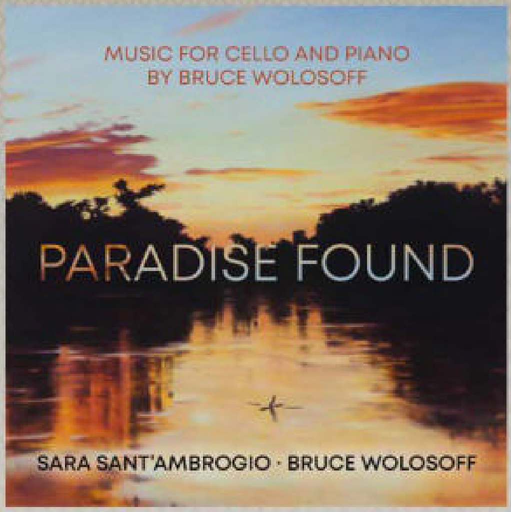
ELENA RUEHR

Composer Elena Ruehr adds to her extensive discography with Icarus, an album of chamber music infused with hints of history, legendary literature, and close collaborations with a multitude of musical colleagues.

AV2503 | CD & DIGITAL

NEW YORK YOUTH SYMPHONY

The New York Youth Symphony makes its recording debut with music by Florence Price, Valerie Coleman, and Jessie Montgomery. With remarkable resilience, the musicians' first studio album brought them together in multiple ways during the COVID pandemic.



AV2492 | CD & DIGITAL

BRUCE WOLOSOFF

On Paradise Found, distinguished New York-based composer-pianist Bruce Wolosoff pairs with Grammy Award-winning cellist Sara Sant'Ambrogio for the first recordings of his two Cello Sonatas and Circe and The Woods.

avie-records.com
Distributed in the UK by Proper Music Distribution Ltd. and in North America by Naxos of America, Inc.

MUSIC · Spotify · prestomusic · EUROPADISC CLASSICAL

A bold dramatisation: Lord Lechery as portrayed by Colin Judson in English National Opera's production of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Labour of a lifetime

For Vaughan Williams, *The Pilgrim's Progress* represented a deeply personal journey that inspired several works, writes Geraint Lewis

Ralph Vaughan Williams knew that he wasn't what most people would consider an operatic composer: 'They won't like it. They don't want an opera with no heroine and no love duets – and I don't care. It's what I meant and there it is.'

Driving back to Dorking from the premiere of his final opera *The Pilgrim's Progress* on 26 April 1951, he had a fair idea of what the general audience felt and what the critics would say next morning – and he was more or less right. Having previously written four full-length operas and a few shorter theatrical works, he knew just how to work the genre for his own distinctive purpose.

> The apparent failure of *The Pilgrim's Progress* hurt Vaughan Williams more than any other creative rebuff

That the inexperienced team allocated to his score at Covent Garden didn't really understand how to realise his very personal vision was hardly his fault. But what should have been the crowning glory of his public career was suddenly to him 'a flop' and he would soon remark bitterly that, 'The Pilgrim is dead and that's that.'

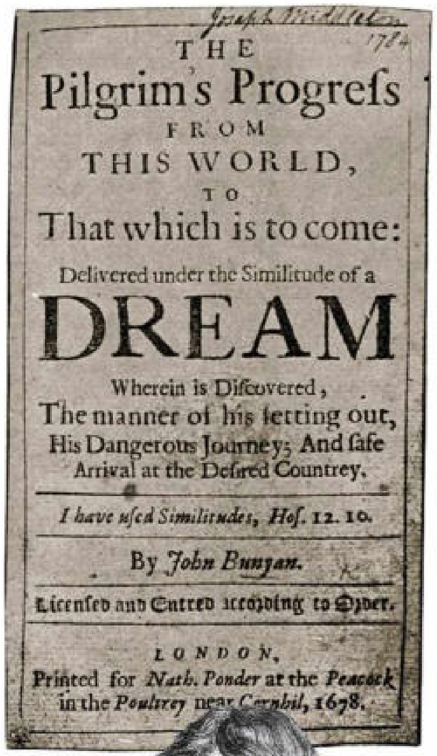
Few in that first audience could have known just how long the composer had been on his creative journey with John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and that the origins of what had become a lifelong obsession lay way back in Edwardian 1906: indeed, RVW himself would hardly have dreamt then that nearly half a century later he

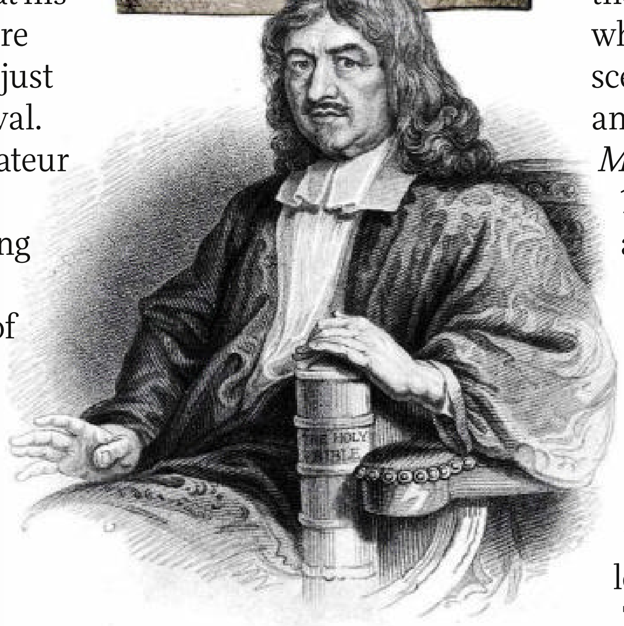
From page to stage: (above) soprano Adele Leigh and (right) Vaughan Williams with Lady Wilson (wife of Steuart Wilson) at rehearsals for the premiere of *Pilgrim's Progress*, 1951; (below) John Bunyan and the first edition of his book

would be sitting in the Royal Opera House as British music's uncontested Grand Old Man. But that status often sat uncomfortably with a composer of uncompromising integrity and determination, so the apparent failure of *Pilgrim's Progress* – a project in which he had invested heart and soul – hurt him more deeply than any other creative rebuff. The work had emerged very gradually and in distinctive stages over several decades (almost accidentally) so that the final score of 1951 literally represented a lifetime's thought and labour.

It was, however, pure chance that friends at Reigate Priory in Surrey were presenting a theatrical version of the classic Puritan allegory in 1906 and thus needed some simple incidental music. The circumstances were rough and ready but the experience brought a vivid childhood recollection back to Vaughan Williams of having the book read to him in the late 1870s. Although now based in London, he spent a lot of time at his family home in nearby Leith Hill Place (where his mother and sister lived) and in 1905 had just become involved in the new Leith Hill Festival.

Almost fortuitously, his music for this amateur production of *Pilgrim's Progress* came in the wake of two interconnected and life-changing explorations: the collecting of folksongs in rural England and the editing and creation of *The English Hymnal*, both of which were put to immediate good use. The noble Scottish hymn-tune *York* (which Vaughan Williams connected to Bunyanesque Roundheads) fitted the bill perfectly to open and close – and this same melody was to be heard on sonorous G major brass at Covent Garden in 1951 as the curtain went up on Bunyan writing in his prison-cell in Bedford: 'So I awoke, and behold it was a dream.' It returns two-and-a-half hours later as he sings directly to the audience: 'O, then come hither, And lay my book, thy head and heart together.' It seems that even at Reigate


THE
Pilgrim's Progrefs
FROM
THIS WORLD,
TO
That which is to come:
Delivered under the Similitude of a
DREAM
Wherein is Difcovered,
The manner of his fetting out,
His Dangerous Journey; And fafe
Arrival at the Defired Countrey.
I have ufed Similitudes, Hof. 12. 10.
By *John Bunyan.*
Licenfed and Entred according to Order.
LONDON,
Printed for *Nath. Ponder* at the *Peacock* in the *Poultrey* near *Cornhil*, 1678.



in 1906 Vaughan Williams had registered that *The Pilgrim's Progress* had operatic possibilities so such continuity between 1906 and '51 only serves to underline the degree to which the opera itself is the summation of a career-long endeavour – but for the time being the idea went to the back of the composer's teeming mind.

The next encounter with Bunyan came in 1921. If, in 1906, Vaughan Williams was only known for a handful of memorable songs, he'd survived the Great War as the acknowledged leader of a new generation of English composers: *A Sea Symphony*, the *Tallis Fantasia*, *On Wenlock Edge* and *A London Symphony* had made their mark and he was now on the staff of the Royal College of Music. For a theatrical presentation there in 1922 he wrote a short one-act opera which he termed 'a pastoral episode', based on a scene towards the end of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and entitled *The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains*. This also used a fragment of the 1906 music but woven now into the richly ambiguous language which had gradually evolved from *The Lark Ascending* (largely pre-war) into that of the war-incubated *A Pastoral Symphony*. While the *Pastoral*'s landscape was largely French and haunted by death, Bunyan's Chilterns restored an English radiance to Vaughan Williams's vision, one which would quickly lead to his first full-length opera, *Hugh the Drover*, in 1924.

Things now become a little less clear. It could well be that the experience of writing a bucolic and folk-saturated opera led naturally to thoughts of a further encounter with John Bunyan – Vaughan Williams's later confidant Michael Kennedy thought that work on drafting a full opera may have begun as early as 1925.

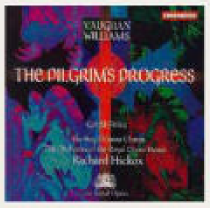
GETTY

The Pilgrim on disc

Recordings of the opera

There are only two recordings of the full opera, and Vaughan Williams devotees will want both. Sir Adrian Boult completed the premiere version in 1971 as part of his late-flowering RVW cycle for EMI. It was fortunate that Cambridge's John Noble was still in such radiant voice, for this performance is dominated by his ardent embodiment of the Pilgrim which had so impressed the composer in 1954. The rest of the cast works magnificently as a team, and Robert Lloyd as Apollyon is impressively amplified as RVW suggested. Boult's long-term vision ensures a natural cohesion without sacrificing theatrical immediacy or vivid incident and was glowingly captured at Kingsway Hall (*Warner Classics 7642122*).

Richard Hickox's 1997 version was made in collaboration with The Royal Opera House. Gerald Finley is the warm-voiced Pilgrim and the rest of Hickox's cast create plenty of characterful interaction, though Gidon Saks's Apollyon is not amplified. With otherwise sumptuous Chandos sound, the Covent Garden forces respond idiomatically to Hickox's clear-sighted direction. Though there isn't really much to choose between these two magnificent accounts, Boult creeps ahead by a few whiskers for his greater architectural grasp of the overall structure and its emotional impact (*Chandos CHAN 9625*).



Primed for *Progress*: (left) Vaughan Williams's first opera *Hugh the Drover* in its premiere staging, 1924, with Tudor Davies as Hugh and Mary Lewis as Mary

GETTY

Yet between 1928 and '36, three operas and a ballet were written which had nothing to do with *The Pilgrim's Progress*. *Sir John in Love* (1928), *Job* (1930), *The Poisoned Kiss* and *Riders to the Sea* (both 1936 but the latter 'in progress' since 1925) explore a wide range of subjects and genres with a simultaneous broadening of the composer's expressive range.

Still, it seems likely that work also continued sporadically on *Pilgrim* throughout this period,

> The 1942 BBC radio score provides a bird's eye view of the opera as 'work in progress'

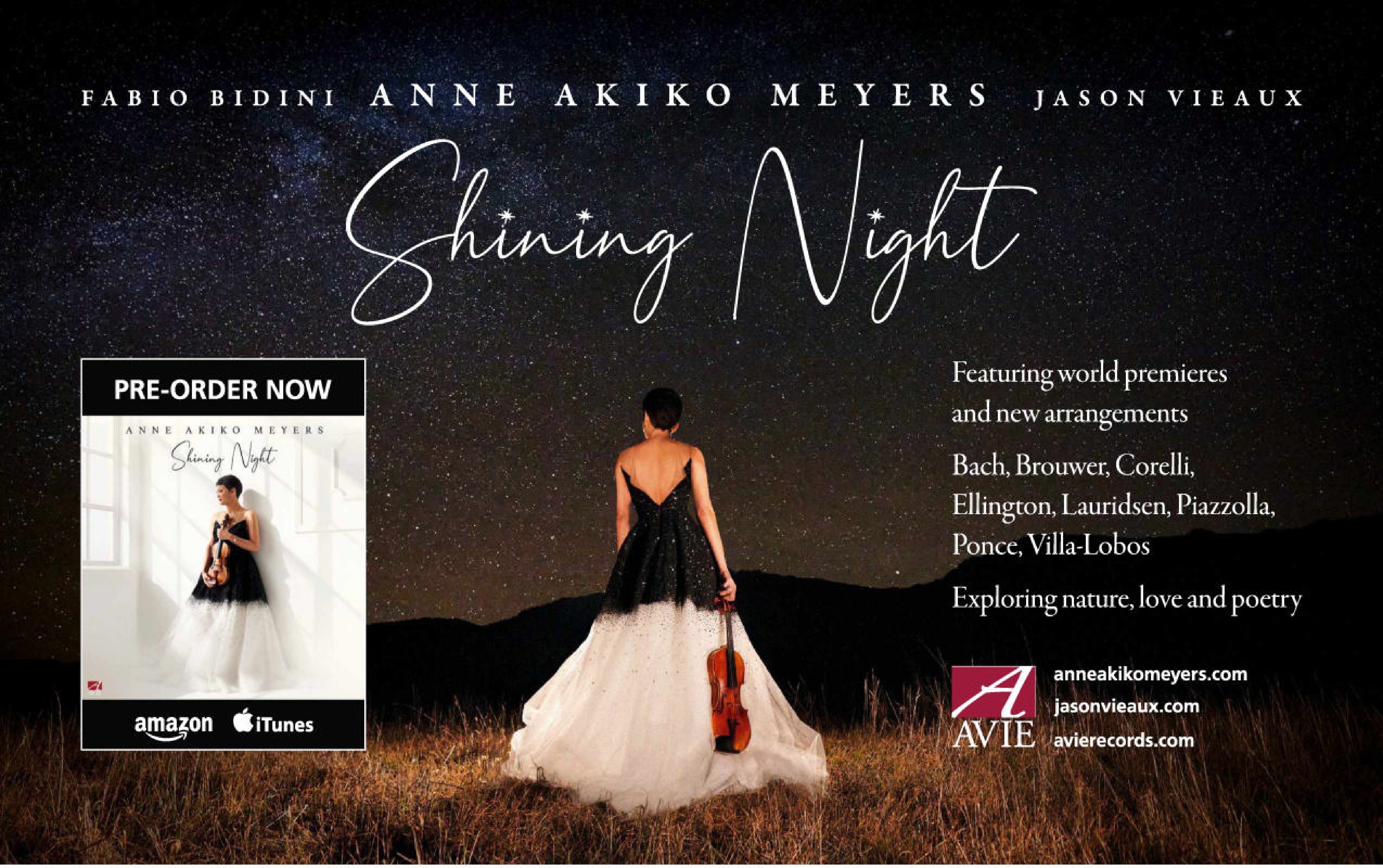
for after a rare bit of 'composer's block' in 1937 Vaughan Williams started to talk of using its material in a new symphony, just in case the opera was never realised. Then a new muse came into his life in 1938, when he met the writer Ursula Wood (later his second wife) – no coincidence, perhaps, that the first music written after their encounter was the radiant *Serenade to Music*, whose rapturous idiom features prominently in the later opera.

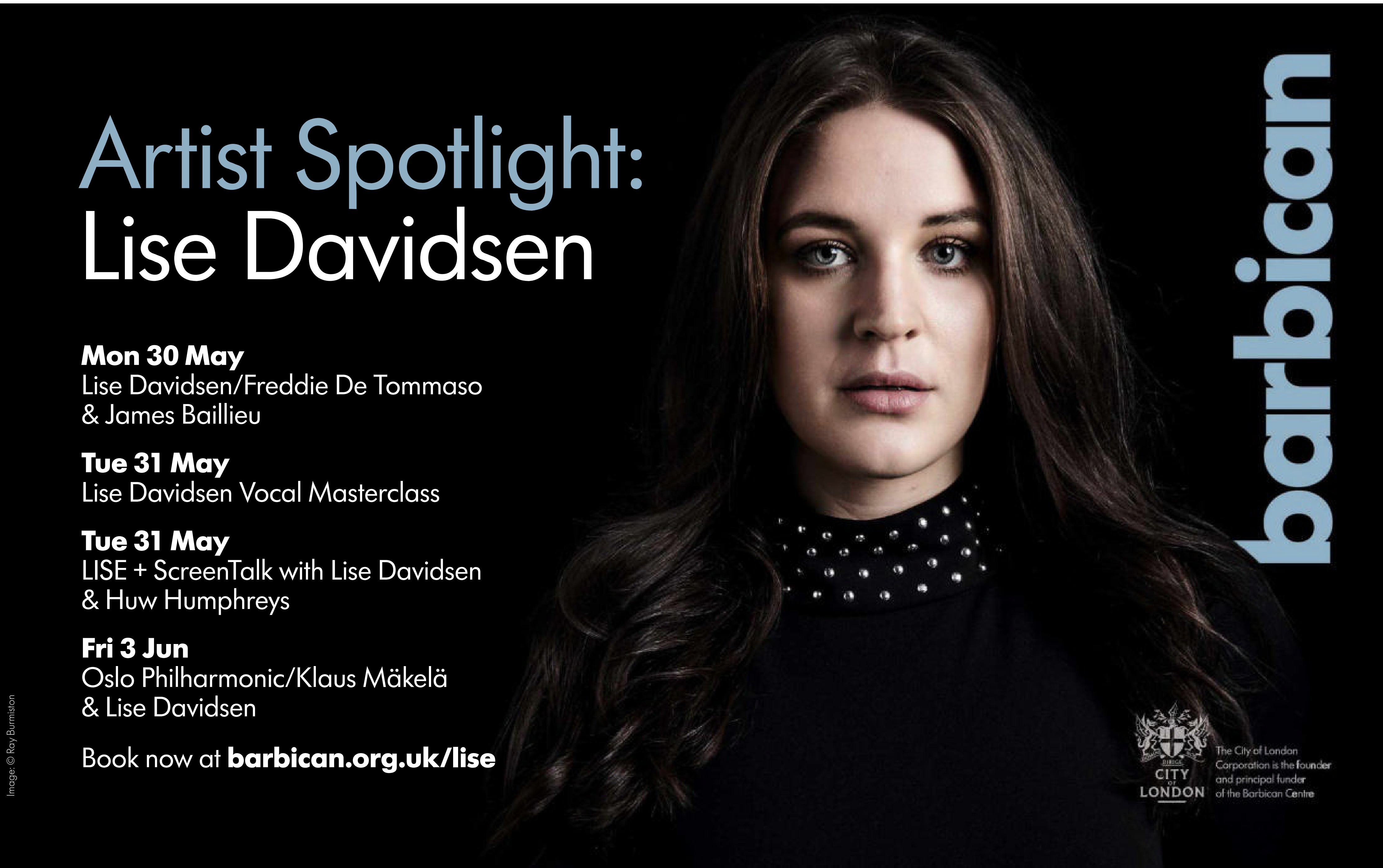
The outbreak of World War II would have thrown a further spanner in any attempt at the opera, but in 1942 a chance commission from the BBC for incidental music to accompany a full version of *The Pilgrim's Progress* gave Vaughan Williams the perfect opportunity to move a step closer to fulfilling his ultimate dream. With so much material already to hand, the radio score provides what is virtually a bird's eye view of the opera as 'work-in-progress' – 21 scenes and some familiar music, notably the 'theme by Thomas Tallis' which had emerged back in 1906 in connection with Bunyan, four years before becoming the basis of his *Fantasia*. Then in 1943, a Proms audience was both entranced and becalmed by the beneficent vision of a distant peaceable kingdom in a war-torn world, as Vaughan Williams conducted the premiere of the Fifth Symphony. But again, very few of those present would have known just how much in this transfigured music was directly connected in the composer's mind to *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

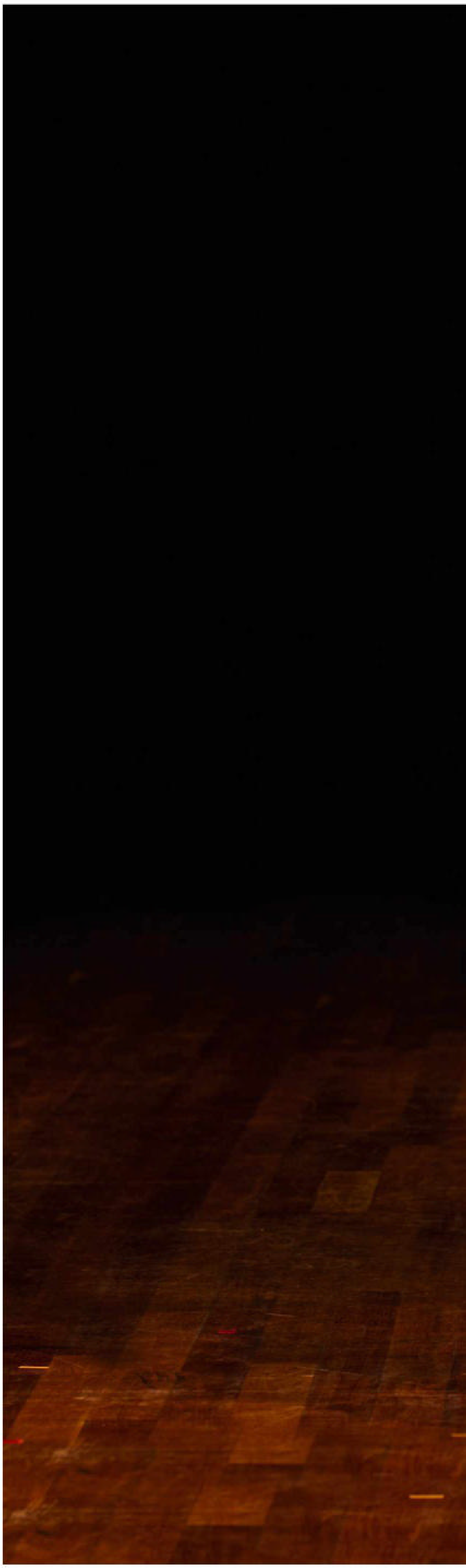
Finally in 1944-45, he embarked on creating the fully-operatic version of Bunyan's text, and by 1949 tentative 'play-throughs' to carefully selected friends, of what Vaughan Williams was now calling a 'Morality', were held to canvas opinion. These eventually led his long-standing friend Steuart Wilson, then deputy general administrator of the Royal Opera House, to arrange its premiere production at Covent Garden in 1951, as part of the general celebrations to mark the Festival of Britain. So we reach that fateful gala night and one of the greatest disappointments of the composer's life. He was partly reassured and comforted by the appreciative support of many respected friends and colleagues, and he knew in his heart of hearts that he'd written what he wanted to achieve.

So what went wrong? In part, it was the famous curse of Covent Garden itself – which was later to blight (in varying degrees) *Gloriana*, *The Midsummer Marriage*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Ice Break*. In 1950, when Vaughan Williams had virtually given up hope of seeing his opera staged by the Royal Opera, he began to approach Cambridge's Arts Theatre with a view to presenting the opera there instead. Perhaps he should have persisted. In 1954 it was to his alma mater that he returned to see a fresh production by the Cambridge University Musical Society in the city's Guildhall. With an ardent-voiced undergraduate John Noble as the Pilgrim and a supporting cast of vividly enthusiastic young students on stage, the composer could finally say categorically, 'This is what I meant!'

Productions and performances since 1954, however, have been thin on the ground and only two commercial recordings exist (see left). Maybe *The Pilgrim's Progress* was never destined to be a popular 'opera' and a box-office success, but it enshrines every aspect of his creative personality. It has sublime transcendence as well as fairground jollity, a mingling of both heavenly and hellish experience plus most things in between – all expressed with a voice of supreme humanity and wisdom.


FABIO BIDINI
ANNE AKIKO MEYERS
JASON VIEAUX
Shining Night
PRE-ORDER NOW
ANNE AKIKO MEYERS
Shining Night
amazon
iTunes
Featuring world premieres and new arrangements
Bach, Brouwer, Corelli, Ellington, Lauridsen, Piazzolla, Ponce, Villa-Lobos
Exploring nature, love and poetry
AVIE
anneakikomeyers.com
jasonvieaux.com
avierecords.com

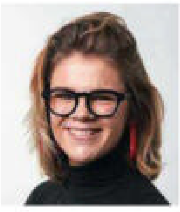

Artist Spotlight:
Lise Davidsen
Mon 30 May
Lise Davidsen/Freddie De Tommaso & James Baillieu
Tue 31 May
Lise Davidsen Vocal Masterclass
Tue 31 May
LISE + ScreenTalk with Lise Davidsen & Huw Humphreys
Fri 3 Jun
Oslo Philharmonic/Klaus Mäkelä & Lise Davidsen
Book now at barbican.org.uk/lise
barbican
CITY OF LONDON
The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre
Image: © Ray Burmiston



> I wanted to play this exact instrument. For me it was the horn or nothing

THE BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE INTERVIEW

Felix Klieser



Despite scepticism from even his own teachers, the German horn player has become a world-class musician by reinventing his instrument's technique, as he explains to **Freya Parr**

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES CHEADLE

Chairs are brought on stage, accompanied with a three-legged metal stand with a French horn laid on top. As an audience member, it's no different to seeing a piano rolled out or an endpin anchor placed down for a cellist. What happens next, though, is a little more surprising. The 31-year-old German horn player Felix Klieser approaches the stage and assumes a position not often seen in the concert hall. With the horn placed in front of him, Klieser's left leg swings up and his toes begin operating the valves with more dexterity than many people can manage with their fingers.

Since Klieser's UK concerto debut as artist-in-residence of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra last November, journalists have become obsessed by the question of 'how he does it'. Headlines are dominated by references to his feet and toes, and there are relentless questions about his supposed yoga regime and how he's able to keep his leg raised for the duration of a half-hour concerto. But to Klieser, it's simple – he knows no different. Take one look on his popular Instagram account, and you'll be met with numerous photos of him using his phone, signing albums and cooking, all with his feet.

'For me, when playing the horn, the valves are the easy part,' he says. 'The only part that I can't operate in the same way as other musicians is the bell.' Most horn players move their right arm in and out of the bell to change the instrument's sound and character. 'I had to come up with my own way of finding my sound,' he says, explaining that he uses his lips, embouchure and breath control to manipulate tone. 'This was one of the main reasons my teacher didn't think I could be a professional when I was younger. When you're doing auditions, there's no space for individuality.'

Despite his prodigious talents, Klieser was facing a system that too often didn't

Felix Klieser's top albums

Five recordings to explore

Beyond Words *(2021)*
CHAARTS Chamber Artists
Berlin Classics 0301460BC
Together with members of the world's leading string quartets, Klieser performs a series of horn transcriptions of Baroque arias by Bach, Vivaldi, Handel and Gluck.

Mozart Horn Concertos *(2019)*
Camerata Salzburg
Berlin Classics 0301188BC
Klieser performs Mozart's concertos, works that are at the heart of the instrument's repertoire.

Horn Trios *(2017)*
With Andrej Bielow (violin) and Herbert Schuch (piano)
Berlin Classics 0300931BC
Brahms's much-loved Horn Trio is performed here alongside lesser-performed trios by Duvernoy, Koechlin and Kahn, showcasing 100 years of horn composition.

Concertos by Joseph & Michael Haydn *(2015)*
Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn/Ruben Gazarian
Berlin Classics 0300647BC
'Klieser's tone is resonant and robust and his command of long-breathed phrasing and agile work equally impressive,' wrote our critic Bayan Northcott of this recording, which also includes pieces by Mozart.

Reveries *(2013)*
With Christof Keymer (piano)
Berlin Classics 0300530BC
A selection of works for the horn and piano from the Romantic era, a period of musical history that placed the horn front and centre, exploiting its full palette of colours.

In good company: (right) Klieser plays for violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter and television presenter Nina Eichinger at the ECHO Klassik Awards at Munich's Gasteig, October 2014

have faith in him. 'I won a prize when I was 15, so my teacher and I were interviewed for a German newspaper. I was asked what I wanted to do when I was older, and my teacher said, "Well, playing the horn is nice to do as a hobby, but I don't think he should do it as a job."' Having been repeatedly told to 'do something different' and feeling as though he had 'no support' from teachers, he learnt to become self-sufficient. 'I didn't trust teachers much after that because I didn't think they believed in me. They thought I was talented, but no one believed a horn player with no arms should become a professional musician.'

It seems that Klieser has always been headstrong, even when he first decided he wanted to play the instrument at the age of three. 'I told my parents I wanted to play the French horn, but they didn't even know what it was. I have no clue where the idea came from – I'd never even been to a concert or met anyone who played,' he says. 'It wasn't music in general I was interested in – I wanted to play this exact instrument. It was the horn or nothing.'

> ‘No one believed that someone with no arms should become a professional player’

His passion for the horn remains unwavering. 'For me, the most important and wonderful thing about it is the colours it can produce.' This is a characteristic that comes to the fore in Klieser's latest project: a new horn concerto written for him by Swedish composer Rolf Martinsson, which he will premiere and record this year with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie. 'It's nearly half-an-hour long, so there's a good chance it'll be the longest horn concerto ever written.' The new work, titled *Soundscape*, will be a 'walk through different colours, creating different landscapes with music,' he explains. It will be the first premiere Klieser has given, but when I ask what role he played in the creation of the work, he is adamant that his involvement thus far has been minimal. 'Writing music is a skill and interpreting it is another. A good musician is usually not a good composer – they are entirely different. He will write it and I will give my interpretation of it.'

One skill he has been able to develop and hone over the years is the art of concert programming. As the BSO's artist-in-residence, he has helped shape programmes to 'show the range of possibilities for the French horn'. An instrument that is often referred to as 'endangered' because of its low take-up by pupils, the horn needs an ambassador like Klieser. 'Hopefully these concerts will help people reconsider what they think a horn can be and how it can be played.'

Having had a free rein in his most recent concert with the BSO principals, Klieser was able to create an entirely new programme. 'In a usual season, you don't get the opportunity to invite ten musicians for one chamber recital. You wouldn't be able to combine works for winds, strings and pianists, because that's a lot of musicians. It was exciting to be able to choose anyone I wanted.'

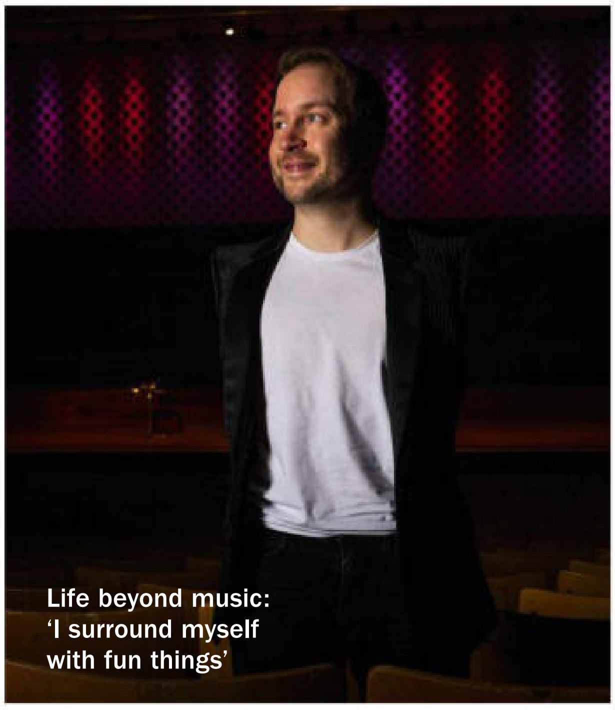
It helps that the French horn has one of the most extensive chamber repertoires. 'There is so much music for horn – it's unbelievable!' he says. 'You don't tend to have trumpets or trombones in chamber music, but the horn is everywhere. It's used even more than the oboe or bassoon. Usually, wind instruments play in wind ensembles and string players in string ensembles, but the horn can play in both.' With everything from Schubert's Octet to Beethoven's Septet at his disposal, there's a lot to choose from. But, he insists,

Horn of plenty: Klieser plays Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 4 with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and conductor Kirill Karabits, Poole, 2021

he's 'not an intellectual when it comes to programming'. First and foremost, his main aim is for the audience to have fun.

This extends to his entire outlook on the classical music world. 'You'll go to some musicians' houses and see rows and rows of books about Beethoven. In mine, you'd never expect me even to be a musician – I just surround myself with things that create fun.' What might we find if we had a snoop around his apartment? 'Lots of Lego,' he admits. 'I've got a Baby Yoda Lego set and have made Super Mario World in Lego. There's also lots of chocolate around. For Christmas, I bought a chocolate Santa Claus that was enormous. It was about this high,' he says, whipping off his shoe and demonstrating the height of the chocolate Santa with his foot neatly pointed about a metre off the floor. 'I'm certainly not the type of person that just sits at home listening to classical music.'

Klieser insists that it's his other interests and passions that make him the musician



Life beyond music: 'I surround myself with fun things'

GETTY

he is today. 'If you're a musician who's not interested in real life, then you're not a musician. The music isn't that important – it's the human story behind it and the musician's need to tell the story that's most important.' As a horn teacher at the Münster University of Music, he regularly meets students who don't know what's going on beyond the walls of their practice rooms. 'You can always tell,' he says. 'They'll play notes, but they won't play music. If I ask them what story they're trying to tell with the music, 99 per cent of the time they won't have an answer. You have to experience the world and all the emotions out there to be a musician.'

Watching Klieser perform, this mantra is at the fore of everything he does. While other artists are immersed in the technicalities of the notes on the page and how best to execute them, Klieser thinks more laterally about music-making. The fact that he plays the horn with his left foot might be the first thing you notice, but this so-called limitation is overlooked almost instantly. What prevails is the memory of a great artist at work.

Felix Klieser's Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra residency continues through the 2022/23 season. See bsolive.com for details.

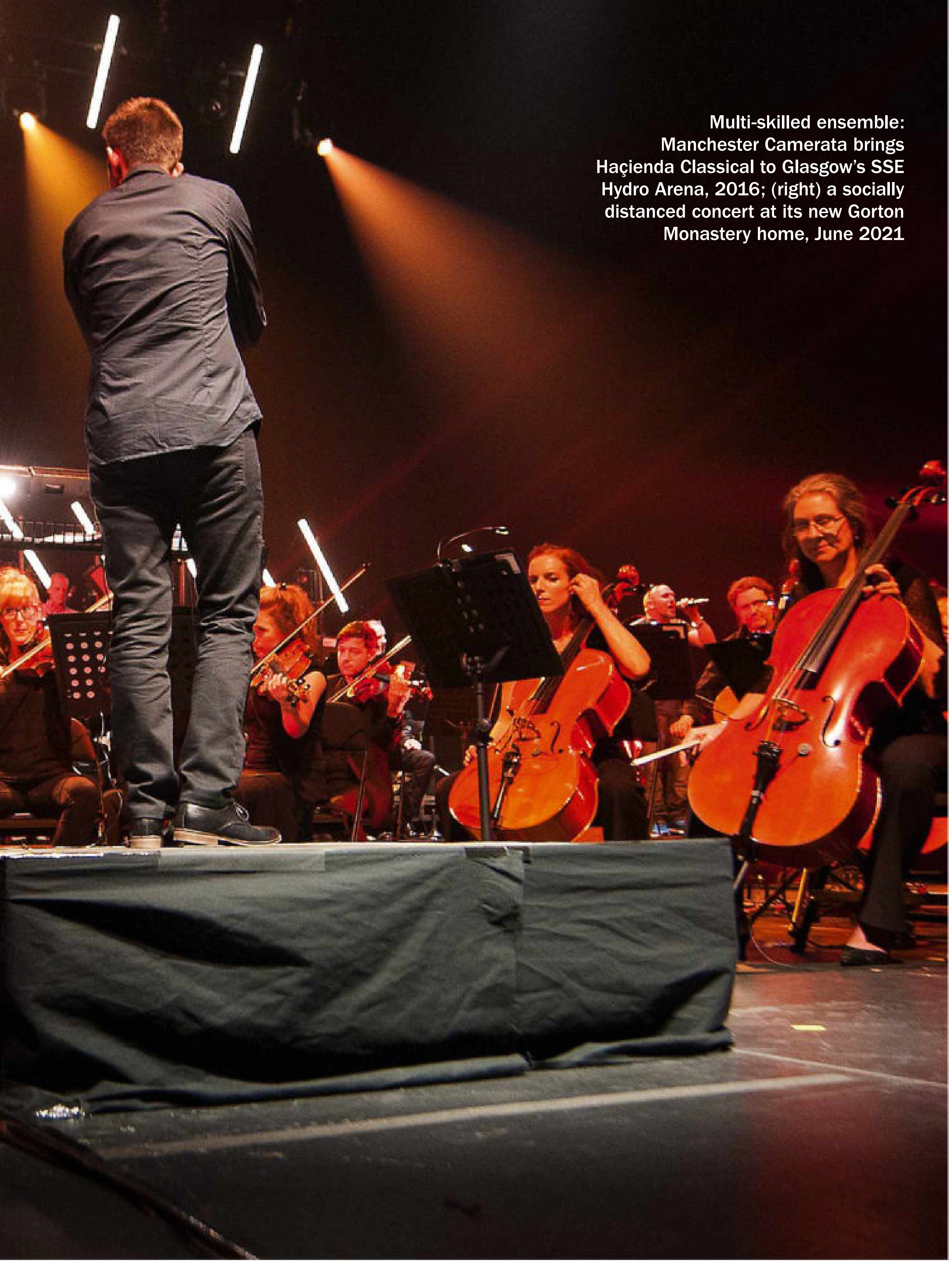
Manchester United

As the candles are lit on its 50th birthday cake, Manchester Camerata is planning to celebrate with friends far beyond its traditional concert audiences, as Jeremy Pound discovers during a packed two-day visit

Bob Riley and I agree that 50 is a good age to be. As we chat over a coffee, the chief executive of Manchester Camerata reveals to me that his own half-century is coming up in May. And, coincidentally, reaching the same milestone just before him is the ensemble itself, having played its first chords together back in April 1972. I trust that someone in the Camerata office has two lots of cake, candles and balloons sorted.

When BBC producer Raph Gonley first started recruiting players for his new chamber orchestra all those years ago, he surely could have had no idea what it would grow into over the next five decades. My two-day schedule here includes not just sitting in on a Manchester Camerata rehearsal, but also covering its outreach work in a secondary school and with patients living with dementia. I'll also be watching the filming of a mental wellbeing video with principal conductor Gábor Takács-Nagy and taking a look round Gorton Monastery, the ensemble's stunning new home. In 1972, orchestras doing outreach work and making videos were unheard of, and

> 'It's valuable to connect with people through whatever music they love, play or take part in'



Multi-skilled ensemble: Manchester Camerata brings Haçienda Classical to Glasgow's SSE Hydro Arena, 2016; (right) a socially distanced concert at its new Gorton Monastery home, June 2021

the Monastery was still holding mass on a daily basis. How things change. 'However, the beating heart of it all is still the orchestra itself,' insists Riley. 'The highest level of quality is paramount. And that has to be fostered and supported for the other stuff to happen.'

For its first 30-or-so years, Manchester Camerata's story was largely one of quietly getting on with it rather than navigating dramatic ups and downs. Named after the Florentine Camerata, a 16th- century group of intellectuals committed to progressing the arts, Gonley's ensemble of freelance musicians built up an audience base with highly polished performances of core chamber orchestra repertoire in and around its home city. Though finances were often precarious and more than one attempt was made to merge the Camerata with fellow Mancunians the Hallé, it managed to stay not just afloat but independent too.

STUART WESTWOOD, GETTY

Piano partner: Jean-Efflam Bavouzet is recording the complete Mozart concertos with the Camerata

Things seem to have picked up pace with the appointment of the Scot Douglas Boyd as music director in 2001. Regular trips were made to the recording studio, not least for a complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies, and in 2005 the Camerata headed to London for its first ever appearance at the BBC Proms, a late-night affair consisting of Mozart, Tippett and Beethoven. A 34-year-old Riley arrived the following year, armed with bags of enthusiasm and ideas, and in 2010 he invited Takács-Nagy to join the crew. For all his acclaim as a string quartet founder and leader, the Hungarian was at that time a relative novice with the baton. A risky choice, perhaps, but one that has proved inspired.

Recent years have also brought a significant shift in focus. Though the Camerata still holds the likes of Beethoven and Mozart close to its heart – the orchestra is currently recording Mozart's complete Piano Concertos with Jean-Efflam Bavouzet for the Chandos label – it is now also enjoying embracing much else besides. In 2017, the main stage at Glastonbury proved an unlikely addition to the Camerata's 'played there' tick list, when the festival opened with its Haçienda Classical set, in which songs associated with the famous Manchester nightclub are given an orchestral twist. Other appearances since then have included a concert with Scottish pop singer Lewis Capaldi for *Radio 1 Presents* and festive celebrations with AMC Gospel Choir. Later this summer, the Camerata will be playing at Manchester's Salaam Festival, a celebration of contemporary Islamic art and culture.

'We've set ourselves some targets to say that a certain amount of our programme will not be explicitly classical music,' says Riley. 'We

From bow to baton: Gábor Takács-Nagy leads the way in Mozart

Meet the maestro
Gábor Takács-Nagy

For a string quartet leader to make the switch to conductor is comparatively rare, and had it not been for a hand injury, one suspects Gábor Takács-Nagy would still be with the Takács Quartet, the highly acclaimed ensemble he founded in 1975. That said, even in his playing days, his podium potential had been spotted by a notable fellow Hungarian.

'In 1991, we played Mozart piano quartets with Georg Solti,' he says. 'He said to me, "Gabor, you could be a good conductor, because your body language is very clear." And though I had been solely a string quartet player, in 1993 I did get a taste of orchestral playing when Iván Fischer invited me to be concertmaster of the Budapest Festival Orchestra for big projects such as recordings and tours. That gave me the opportunity to see an orchestra from the inside.'

In turn, when he joined the Camerata, his own expertise from outside the orchestra also proved useful: 'I was able to bring to the players the fantastically rich string education I'd enjoyed in Budapest, particularly in terms of timing and creating different colours. They were very keen to learn it from me.'

think it's as valuable to connect with people through whatever music they love, play and can take part in as it is to connect through classical music. It's about not always being bound by a concert hall, where the expectations are that it has to be another – albeit probably amazing – performance of a historical piece of music. Our programme for our 50th-anniversary season is very diverse in what we play, but at the root of it is a very high quality of endeavour, both at the programming stage and in the playing itself.'

And what better place in which to celebrate that 50th-anniversary season than the Gorton Monastery (see right). Founded – with rather neat coincidence – 150 years ago, this magnificent former Franciscan church and friary welcomed its new orchestral tenants in June last year. It would seem an ideal match: the Monastery, whose brotherhood and congregation said their final 'Amen' back in 1989, was looking to re-invent itself as a local community hub after Covid left its business as a wedding and corporate events host in tatters; the Camerata welcomed a home base that came complete with a large and adaptable performance space.

What's more, explains Riley, it also gave them a chance to put down some local roots. 'When we decided to make the move here, it was never just about the move to this building,' he says. 'It was about being an intrinsic, embedded part of the whole community. And when we arrived here, part of our conversation was that we should go out and knock on a few doors and say "Hello! Who are you and what do you do?"'

Among those to say 'hello!' in return were St Peter's High School in nearby Longsight, to which I am invited to watch a Camerata outreach session – a Year 10 hip hop workshop, led by vocalist LayFullstop. Immaculately well behaved and engaged, the 14 and 15 year-olds are grouped in twos and threes round keyboards and computers, from which sampled sounds occasionally emerge – one group, I notice, is adding a bit of Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata

> 'Knowing that you are actually improving the quality of someone's life is amazing'

into the mix, another is working out a riff on a treble recorder. When, at the end of the session, the pupils are invited to show how they've been getting on, the results are impressive.

At the other end of the age spectrum, meanwhile, are the residents of the The Dell care home, who I join for one of the Camerata's Music in Mind sessions at a church hall. Here, patients and carers sit in a circle while, at a keyboard, music therapist Brigitte Jones leads them in an hour of songs with percussion. Much has been written – not least in *BBC Music Magazine* – about the proven benefits that those living with dementia get from participating in music, but to witness it in person is both inspiring and moving, not least when one of the residents takes

A wider perspective: (left) Edward Heath conducts the Camerata at Rasiguères Festival, France, 1990; (below) a Music in Mind session at Gorton Monastery; (right) bringing lessons to life at a local primary school

over proceedings and leads us all in a rendition of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow'. He has a wonderful voice.

Helping out in both the St Peter's and Dell sessions, providing advice in the former and general encouragement in the latter, is Camerata percussionist Andrea Vogler. 'I've been doing outreach work for a long time,' she tells me. 'As well as working with the Camerata, I also teach, so this is a case of my two worlds colliding. I think people are really starting to appreciate the benefit of outreach. With the work we've been doing with Webster Primary School, for instance, we've been helping to deliver their mainstream curriculum – history, English or whatever – through music. It's music as a means of delivery and communication, not just music for music's sake. Above all, though, it's the music and dementia work that I find most rewarding. Knowing that you're not just entertaining someone but actually improving the quality of their life is amazing. I certainly didn't expect that when I trained at music college!'

Later in the day, I meet PhD student Katherine Blumer who, for her research into music and dementia, is being supported by the Camerata in being given access to the Music in Mind work and its findings. And later still, as most of Manchester thinks about having its supper, sticking on the TV or heading pubwards, I get to see another aspect of this tireless organisation's activities to reach out to wider audiences. At Stoller Hall in the centre of town, Gábor Takács-Nagy is being filmed for a video about how he emerged from a moment of personal trauma to begin his new life as a conductor – part of the Camerata's 'Untold' series, telling real-life stories of people who have faced adversity.

CLIVE BARDA/ARENA PAL, ANTHONY ROBLING, DUNCAN ELLIOTT, RACHEL BYWATER

Gorton Monastery

Designed by the architect Edward Pugin, the Church of St Francis in Gorton held its first service in 1872, pre-dated by a few years by the adjoining Franciscan friary. For much of the next 100 years, it would prove a thriving religious hub, but a housing demolition programme in the 1970s saw its congregation dwindle. When the friars left in 1989, the site was sold for conversion into flats, but the scheme failed and the buildings fell into disrepair. In 1996, a trust was set up by volunteers to raise the millions needed to restore Gorton Monastery, a task that carried on well into the 21st century.

'After playing in the Takács Quartet for 17 years, I left it in 1992 because of a problem with my right hand,' Takács-Nagy explains to me shortly before he heads off to sit in front of the camera. 'I agreed with the boys that I couldn't carry on playing at the highest level. I still played the violin but couldn't solve the problem, and then started to conduct in 2002. It was in 2010 that I met Bob Riley – at the time, Dougie Boyd was moving somewhere else, so the Camerata was looking for a new artistic director. I conducted the orchestra to see if we had an affinity, and we did!'

Takács-Nagy and the Camerata have now got to know each other at close quarters for more than a decade, and the partnership seems as happy as ever. So what, in his view, are his ensemble's great strengths? 'First of all, they are very good individual players, and they are musically very refined. Their human side is strong too – every one of them is a good person, and the atmosphere is strong, with no-one pulling things down. This is rare in an orchestra. And they are very versatile as well!'

An avid Manchester United football fan since boyhood, he is, he says, also full of love for his ensemble's home city. 'My wife was born near Manchester – in Burnley – so my daughters are half-British. I feel totally at home here! Manchester has a great cultural scene, and thankfully we have our own followers who come to our concerts very faithfully. Of course, those big, excellent orchestras, the Hallé and the BBC Philharmonic, are part of Manchester's image, but now I think we have become more and more part of that picture too, and we play repertoire that they don't often do. We have a place here, and I am very proud of that.'

Master *of* reinvention

Stephen Sondheim transformed musical theatre through his groundbreaking works – yet he never appreciated his true impact, writes James Inverne

It is four months since Stephen Sondheim died at the unshocking age of 91. Yet the profound sense of shock, of a gaping hole that nothing but his own work can fill, still permeates the entwining worlds of music and theatre. 'I equate him to my hero, Gustav Mahler,' says conductor Andrew Litton. 'I've worked with many brilliant living composers, but none of those has had the same kind of impact on the world as Sondheim.' Others, including Bernadette Peters – who unforgettably took on leading roles in his *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Into the Woods* – still sound stunned. 'It's so hard to understand that he's not on the planet anymore; it's just...strange,' she says.

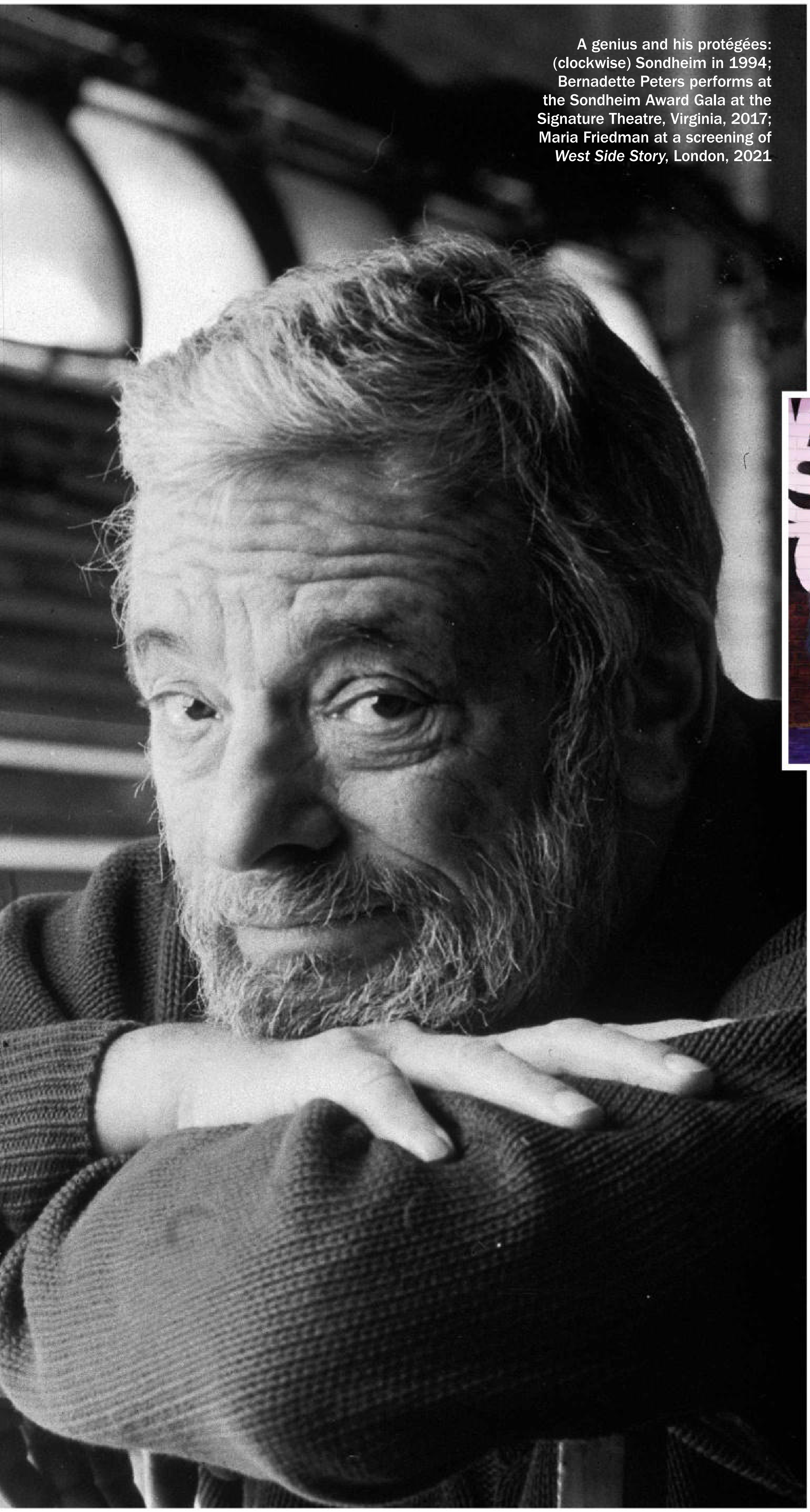
Truly great creative artists inevitably alter their art forms. A rare few do so several times over, and a still smaller number do it in more than one discipline. Sondheim was a master composer, a master lyricist and a master show-creator. While linked, those three crafts are not the same and he changed all three of them. In his hands, musicals became shifting – sometimes abstractly so – pieces of complex drama, to be sifted and fitted together in the audience's minds.

It didn't come from nowhere. As a youngster he was mentored by Oscar Hammerstein II, who himself had changed the course of musical theatre twice (with *Show Boat* and *Oklahoma!*). Hammerstein demanded that the wannabe composer first learn the mechanics of lyric-writing: the results were *West Side Story* with Leonard Bernstein, and Jule Styne's *Gypsy* – not a bad start. Nor was his first songs-plus-lyrics show, the 1962 farce *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, which ran for 964 performances, won six Tony Awards and became a film.

It was after *Forum* that Sondheim started to produce true masterpieces but, ironically, he never recaptured that hit-out-of-the-gate smash. Experimental, reinventing himself almost by the show, his musicals moved through contemporary dating drama *Company* (1970), nostalgic theatrical tragedy *Follies* (1971), poised waltz-time comedy *A Little Night Music* (1973), Japan-set *Pacific Overtures* (1976), Grand Guignol comedy-horror *Sweeney Todd* (1979), a tale of decaying friendship told backwards in *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), an examination of the life and work of pointillist artist Georges Seurat in *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), fairy-tale mash-up *Into the Woods* (1986), a showcase of American presidential murderers in *Assassins* (1990), and twisted classical romance *Passion* (1994). And those are just the major ones. Some did moderate box-office. Others flopped – *Merrily* closed after

> 'Sondheim wasn't afraid to use multiple genres within a work – opera, waltzes, Schubert lied'

GETTY



A genius and his protégées: (clockwise) Sondheim in 1994; Bernadette Peters performs at the Sondheim Award Gala at the Signature Theatre, Virginia, 2017; Maria Friedman at a screening of *West Side Story*, London, 2021

a paltry 16 performances on Broadway. Yet the pattern, by and large, was the same. Show comes out, show does OK (usually), show closes, show is later hailed as a masterpiece, constantly revived and revered.

'So much of his stuff was ahead of its time,' says Litton, who conducted famous concert performances of *Sweeney Todd* with the New York Philharmonic in 2000 (happily, preserved on record). 'Audiences weren't ready for it when it first came out. Once they experienced it, it opened the doors to everyone else trying to be like him. Sondheim wasn't afraid to use multiple genres within a work: *Sweeney Todd* has everything from opera to waltzes to almost a Schubert lied, and much more. And with Sondheim, you wouldn't come out humming the songs; instead, you came out with this whole experience in your brain, and your head exploding because there was so much information, so many different emotions.'

For many, it is that barrage of gifts that is so irresistible – fusillades of brilliantly clever lyrics, plots so gloriously conceived that they sometimes aren't even plots (looking at you, *Company*), and the way everything flows into a sea of endless compassion: for the characters and, through them, for actors and the audience. Maria Friedman, who created the role of Fosca in *Passion* and has performed in and directed many of Sondheim's works, explains how these qualities can be found in the most minute of moments. 'In *Follies*, in the song "Losing My Mind", you get the line "The thought of you stays bright",' she says. 'The word "bright" goes right down to a low note. The character is feeling

Many happy returns: Sondheim with Betsy Wolfe and others at the Encores! revival of *Merrily We Roll Along*, New York City, 2012

low, and that "bright" has darkness to it. What she's feeling is not brightness, it's despair. The word "bright" also means piercing. Sondheim loves those contradictions, the contradictions of being alive. With everything he writes, his characters say one thing and also mean another – "I love you, I can't love you, I wish I could". For most of us, what we say is not actually what we feel. What is more important is what you feel underneath – and Steve leaves room for the actor, for the humanity. The person who interprets it has space to bring their own life to it. Sondheim doesn't dictate or decide. He asks questions, and there are rarely definite answers.'

It can be a painful process. 'I directed *Sunday* in Chicago in 2004, with Audra McDonald and Michael Cerveris,' says actor and director Lonny Price (who created the role of Charlie in *Merrily*). 'We were all having difficulties in our personal relationships. And it was hard to get through rehearsals, because we were all emotionally so raw, and that show just felt so truthful about what we were all going through. Sondheim said the songs were never about him, but so keen and so on target was his understanding of human emotion and heartbreak that many moments in the shows, however old you are, they keep meaning different things to you. The material grows with you, or you grow with it, and it gets richer because you understand more.'

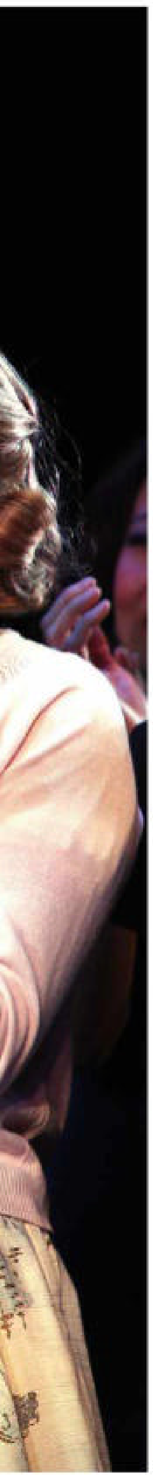
Friedman, mid-rehearsals for her Sondheim tribute show at London's Menier Chocolate Factory, agrees, and adds a caveat. 'I did *Passion* when I was going through a breakup. Fosca was a person who was obsessed and didn't know how to love healthily – it was a daily lesson that it was better for me to let go than to hang on. That caused me unbelievable pain; it was like tapping on an open wound every night. People in the show who knew what I was going through used to watch from the wings and say they couldn't breathe, because they knew the relevance to my own life. But as a performer, you can't be the one sobbing. You've got to know where that goes, let it go there and then you need to focus it like a laser beam, offering it in a healing way, for the audience. You have to get out of the way at that point. You bring your life to Sondheim, not for catharsis, but in order to offer.'

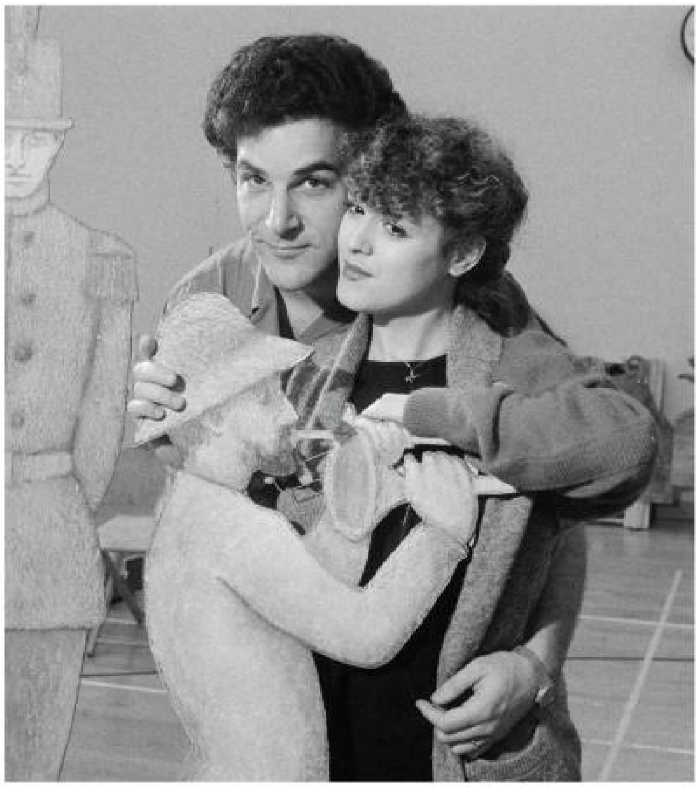
That multi-dimensional richness extends to the music. Reviewers used to view Sondheim as a great lyricist and only a good composer – something he hated, having studied composing with the distinguished modernist Milton Babbitt, while regarding lyric-writing as 'grunt work'. That view has changed.

'Equal to Gustav Mahler': Andrew Litton reckons Stephen Sondheim's impact exceeds that of any living composer he has conducted

'I regard Sondheim as one of the great American composers,' says pianist Anthony de Mare, whose *Liaisons: Re-Imagining Sondheim* project has seen dozens of leading composers contribute piano miniatures based on Sondheim songs. 'The mission of my project was to show him as a composer. And there is so much in his music; it can take many approaches. Both Gabriel Kahane and Kevin Puts opted to tackle "Being Alive" from *Company*, and each did it completely differently. The song depicts the character, Bobby, trying to open himself up, wanting a relationship. Gabe's perception was that Bobby wouldn't be able to embrace this, so in his version, every time he gives you a portion of the melody it quickly evaporates. Kevin Puts sees it as celebratory, so his version is a celebration of Sondheim's utterly unique harmonic vocabulary – starting serene, and in a very virtuosic way building harmonically and emotionally to a huge climax.'

Sondheim's process was as thoughtful as the results. 'He wrote slowly,' says Peters, 'When we workshopped *Sunday*, he was writing it as we





Stage and studio: (left) Mandy Patinkin and Bernadette Peters in *Sunday in the Park with George*; (below left) Emma Thompson and Bryn Terfel in *Sweeney Todd*, 2015; (right) Sondheim at the *Into the Woods* sessions, 1987

GETTY

were doing it. A new song would come in every day. We'd wait, agog. I remember the day he came in with "Finishing the Hat"; Mandy Patinkin, as George, loved it so much he put it in that night. The character had a sketchbook, and Mandy hid the lyrics in the sketchbook! He hadn't had time to learn it, but couldn't wait to do it.'

Yet there was also something more emotional, says Peters, something of the all-consuming method actor to Sondheim. 'He took on each show as an actor taking on a role – he would inhabit the show's unique personality. When he worked with me on Sally in *Follies*, he would say, "I know exactly what her house looks like, what her life's like." He delved so deeply, and he went into everything. So, his writing takes you where you need to be, because he's already chosen the best way.'

Thoughtful, emotional – also personal. Sondheim once told me, 'I've spent years in therapy trying to understand why my shows aren't as successful as Andrew Lloyd Webber's.' Lonny Price believes he never appreciated the contribution he had made. 'At the end, no, I don't think he had recognised what he had done,' says Price. 'When I was younger, I used to collect *The New York Times* theatre ads. I'd saved the ones from *Company* and *Follies*, with all the glorious review quotes, and I showed them to Steve. He looked at this slew of compliments, and he said, "Well, this guy didn't like *Forum*, this one walked out of this." He only saw the negative. That was very sad. I don't think he ever came to a point where he felt he had done what he had wanted to or as much as he had wanted to. He continued to look at success based on how long the shows ran. He'd look at *Phantom* and say, "That's a hit". Somehow, he wanted to convince himself that they weren't successful, with all of the evidence to the contrary. He chose to do things that interested him, and yet when they were ahead of their time or didn't bring in a mass audience, he was disappointed.'

The work, though, could bring him a very pure kind of joy. After the New York Philharmonic

> 'Watching him watch his material with an audience so enamoured of it was very moving'

Sweeney Todd, Litton describes the audience reaction as 'like an animal roar. And out came Steve for his bow and the sound of 2,500 people screaming, it was actually scary!' But the real reward? 'Afterwards he and I walked off and shared an elevator down to the dressing rooms. And he did a little dance – a jig! – all to himself in the elevator. I'll never forget that.'

Price's favourite Sondheim memory is similar. 'I put together a birthday concert for him in New York, and we had the camera on him – he didn't know. And seeing his intense emotional responses to the performances, watching him watch his material with an audience that was so enamoured of it all, was very moving.'

You can see this sort of thing in some of the many YouTube videos of Sondheim watching singers perform his music. It's as though he can't help himself. The eyes half-close, the eyebrows go up and if he's happy, they dance and the head sways gently. And those of us who love Sondheim's work feel happy because we wanted him to be happy. Because through his shows, we have come to know ourselves a little bit more, and a little bit better. And I hope he knew.

Five great recordings

Sondheim in the studio

Company *1970*
Dean Jones, Elaine Stritch et al
Sony Classical SK65283
Everything feels on the line, if mostly under the surface, in this fantastic original Broadway cast album.

Follies *1985*
Elaine Stritch, Carol Burnett, Barbara Cook et al
RCA RCD2-7128
A concert performance with a once-in-a-lifetime cast: Elaine Stritch's 'Broadway Baby', Carol Burnett's 'I'm Still Here' and above all, Barbara Cook's 'Losing My Mind' are its Holy Trinity.

Into The Woods *1987*
Sony 82876 68636-2
Another wonderful original Broadway cast (and one of the first instances of rap in a Broadway musical), funny and dark – often at the same time.

A Little Night Music *1996*
Siân Phillips, Judi Dench, Patricia Hodge et al
Tring TRING001, 1996
Judi Dench's rendition of 'Send In The Clowns' is heartbreaking, but she also has wit and force aplenty in this marvellous National Theatre recording.

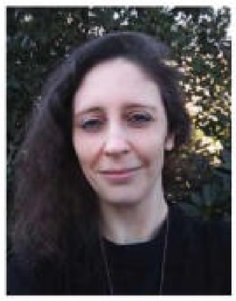
Sweeney Todd *2000*
George Hearn, Patti LuPone, Neil Patrick Harris et al
New York Phil NYP 2001/2002
The greatest Sweeney, George Hearn, came out of retirement for this superbly cast New York Philharmonic performance, conducted by Andrew Litton.

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

FESTIVAL GUIDE 2022

COMPILED & WRITTEN: PAUL RILEY

Welcome!



It's with very great pleasure that we welcome you to this year's summer festival guide! The last two seasons have been particularly challenging for live music making, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and many festivals have been forced to downgrade activities or cancel performances altogether.

It's hugely gratifying, then, to see most events back up and running at full capacity in 2022, in what promises to be a summer of top-notch musical activity. From the complete Bartók string quartets in Aldeburgh, to *La bohème* in Jackson Hole, to Brahms and Mendelssohn symphonies in Sapporo, there's something to suit all tastes and budgets. We're greatly looking forward to what this festival season has to offer – and please do get in touch to share your own experiences over these next exciting months. **Charlotte Smith** *Editor*

United Kingdom

The Bridge Festival
Glasgow, 21-24 April
Web: www.bridgestrings.eu
The cancellation of last year's debut edition was a blow. But the waiting is over as string ensembles representing Scotland, Germany, Norway and Estonia build bridges across Glasgow's cafes, warehouses and pavements! The Scottish Ensemble, Trondheim Soloists, Ensemble Resonanz and PLMF Music Trust join forces on opening night for a pan-European celebration in the Barrowland Ballroom, with composers ranging from Hildegard of Bingen to Jonny Greenwood. There are world premieres, too, of works by Erkki-Sven Tüür and Mica Levi.

Leeds Lieder Festival
Leeds, 28 April – 1 May
Tel. +44 (0)113 234 6956
Web: www.leedslieder.org.uk
'Song Illuminated' is the strapline under which Leeds Lieder returns to the handsomely refurbished Howard Assembly Room. It takes the broad view. There are new works by Jonathan Dove and Deborah Pritchard, 'SongPath' walking trails and protest songs by the likes of Joni Mitchell to ring the changes on more mainstream fare such as Mahler from soprano Dorothea Röschmann and Schubert's *Schwanengesang* performed by tenor Ian Bostridge with Imogen Cooper.

Brighton Festival
Brighton, 7 – 29 May
Tel. +44 (0)1273 709709
Web: www.brightonfestival.org
Sculptor Anish Kapoor was the first guest director of the festival back in 2009, and successors have included Laurie Anderson and Ali Smith. This year the mantle falls on writer-architect Marwa Al-Sabouni and site-specific theatre artist Tristan Sharps – their theme, 'Rebuilding'. Brighton certainly rebuilds with a vengeance. Over 150 events muster some 10 commissions, plus five world and UK premieres. Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* gets the Big Top treatment

KAUPO KIKKAS

Flanking move: Voces8 sing at Newbury, Swaledale and Romney Marsh

from Circa; the Marian Consort pairs Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien* with a new work by David Fennessy; and under Ilan Volkov the Festival Chorus and Philharmonia Orchestra weigh anchor on Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* and Kaija Saariaho's *Oltra mar.*

Chipping Campden Festival

Chipping Campden, 7-21 May

Tel. +44 (0)1386 849018

Web: www.campdenmusicfestival.co.uk

For two decades the festival has provided the soundtrack to a Cotswold Spring, and for anniversary year, medieval St James' Church welcomes returning friends such as Florilegium, cellist Steven Isserlis and festival president Paul Lewis. There are distinguished newcomers too: Quatuor Modigliani prefaces transcendental Schubert with the UK premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Split Apart*; the Julian Bliss Wind Soloists cut Beethoven down to size; and pianist Mitsuko Uchida accompanies tenor Mark Padmore.

Newbury Spring Festival

Newbury, 7-21 May

Tel. +44 (0)845 5218 218

Web: www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk

From stately homes to ancient churches, Victorian Corn Exchange to Sheepdrove Eco Centre, there's no shortage of distinctive venues as Newbury springs into festive life. The BBC Symphony Orchestra's Vaughan Williams symphony cycle unleashes the protean No. 4, and Voces8 flank Monteverdi's *Lagrime d'Amante al Sepolcro dell'Amata* with Britten and Dove.

London Festival of Baroque Music

St John's Smith Square, London, 13-21 May

Tel. +44 (0)20 7222 1061

Web: www.lfbm.org.uk

La Serenissima casts its spell over the festival's 38th edition which, an excursion to Westminster Abbey for the Monteverdi Vespers aside, calls St John's Smith Square 'home'. It ends with a 'seasoning' of Vivaldi courtesy of Rachel Podger and Brecon Baroque, but there's plenty of room for the less well-known. Siglo de Oro explores Lassus's links to Venice, while the Gesualdo Six traces Josquin's legacy through Willaert and Zarlino. And, following in the footsteps of the Venetian merchants, the Illyria and Marian Consorts join forces for a trip down the Adriatic Coast.

United Kingdom

Big hitters: Swedish soprano Hanna Husáhr at Norfolk; (left) percussionist Evelyn Glennie at Swaledale

GETTY, MAGNUS SKREDE

Bath Festival

Bath, 13-21 May

Tel. +44 (0)1225 463362

Web: www.bathfestivals.org.uk

With everyone invited, opening night 'Party in the City' can only mean one thing: Bath Festival is returning to revelry. And with the music and literature festivals conjoined, there's overlap as the Carducci Quartet portrays Shostakovich in words and music, pianist Jeremy Denk interleaves Book I of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* with excerpts from his new book, and novelist James Runcie reflects on the creation of the *St Matthew Passion*. Poulenc's *La voix humaine* despatches soprano Claire Booth to assorted secret locations; the Roman Baths inspire orchestral water music by Takemitsu and Grace Williams; and in the Abbey, Steve Reich and Palestrina detain Colin Currie and The Tallis Scholars respectively.

Norfolk and Norwich Festival

Norwich, 13-29 May

Tel. +44 (0)1603 531800

Web: www.nnfestival.org.uk

Elgar, Britten and Vaughan Williams are all stitched into the 250-year-old fabric of a festival that grew out of a 1772 charity fundraiser. And as the birthday cake is cut, two of them are back. Vaughan Williams's *Five Tudor Portraits* was commissioned for the 1936 Festival and partners his *Norfolk Rhapsody* No. 1. Soprano Hanna Husáhr recalls the visits of the 'Swedish Nightingale' Jenny Lind; Heinrich Biber's complete *Mystery Sonatas* are performed across three concerts; Arun Ghosh's *Canticle of the Sun* sets words by St Francis of Assisi; and in the opening weekend, pop-up premieres sound 250 Fanfares.

Perth Arts Festival

Perth, 18-29 May

Tel. +44 (0)1738 621031

Web: www.perthfestival.co.uk

Originally a festival for classical music and opera, Perth has since expanded to cover all the arts. But as it celebrates its half-century, the human voice is front and centre. A gala night with Scottish Opera raises the curtain and Opera Bohemia makes its Festival debut with a chamber reworking of Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*. Crack vocal ensemble Tenebrae sings Marian settings by Parsons, Bruckner and Grieg, while Judith Weir's *The Voice of Desire* lends its title to mezzo Rowan Hellier's song recital of Clara Schumann, Brahms and Kate Whitley.

English Music Festival

Dorchester-on-Thames, 27-29 May

Tel. +44 (0)7808 473 889

Web: www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk

Little surprise that Vaughan Williams 150 has set English Music Festival's heart a-flutter. And in keeping with its penchant for rehabilitating the less frequently performed, the ballet *Old King Cole* crowns a concert given by the BBC Concert Orchestra. Ivor Gurney's Violin Sonata in D is another 'first'; baritone Gareth Brynmor John champions Havergal Brian; and Noël Coward bags the last word.

Swaledale Festival

North Yorkshire, 28 May-11 June

Tel. +44 (0)1748 880018

Web: www.swalefest.org

With the wildflower hay meadows in full bloom, Swaledale's Guided Walks are as colourful as its 50th-anniversary programme, which cries 'Hallelujah' with a gala performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Ripon Cathedral. Evelyn Glennie heads a line-up including the Chelys Consort of Viols for Jill Jarman's new work *The Language of Bells*; and in stately St Andrew's Grinton, violinist Rachel Podger and Voces8 collaborate on works ancient and modern. Wrapping things up are The Versatile Serenaders, but not before Brett Dean has introduced his specially commissioned new work.

Aldeburgh Festival

Snape Maltings and around, 3-26 June

Tel. +44 (0)1728 687110

Web: www.brittenpearsarts.org

Some festivals are venturing back into live performance a little gingerly. Not

75 EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

5–28 AUGUST

EIF.CO.UK
#EDINTFEST

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF BRINGING WORLD CULTURES TOGETHER

CZECH PHILHARMONIC LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA **THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA**
BERGEN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA **PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA**
HELSINKI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA THE ENGLISH CONCERT

ZUBIN MEHTA **VÍKINGUR ÓLAFSSON** YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN **ELIM CHAN**
MALIN BYSTRÖM IESTYN DAVIES **GOLDA SCHULTZ** SUSANNA MÄLKKI
NICOLA BENEDETTI **ANNE SOFIE VON OTTER** BRUCE LIU

RUSALKA SAUL **SALOME** CARMINA BURANA

AND MANY MORE

Charity No SC004694

EDINBVRGH

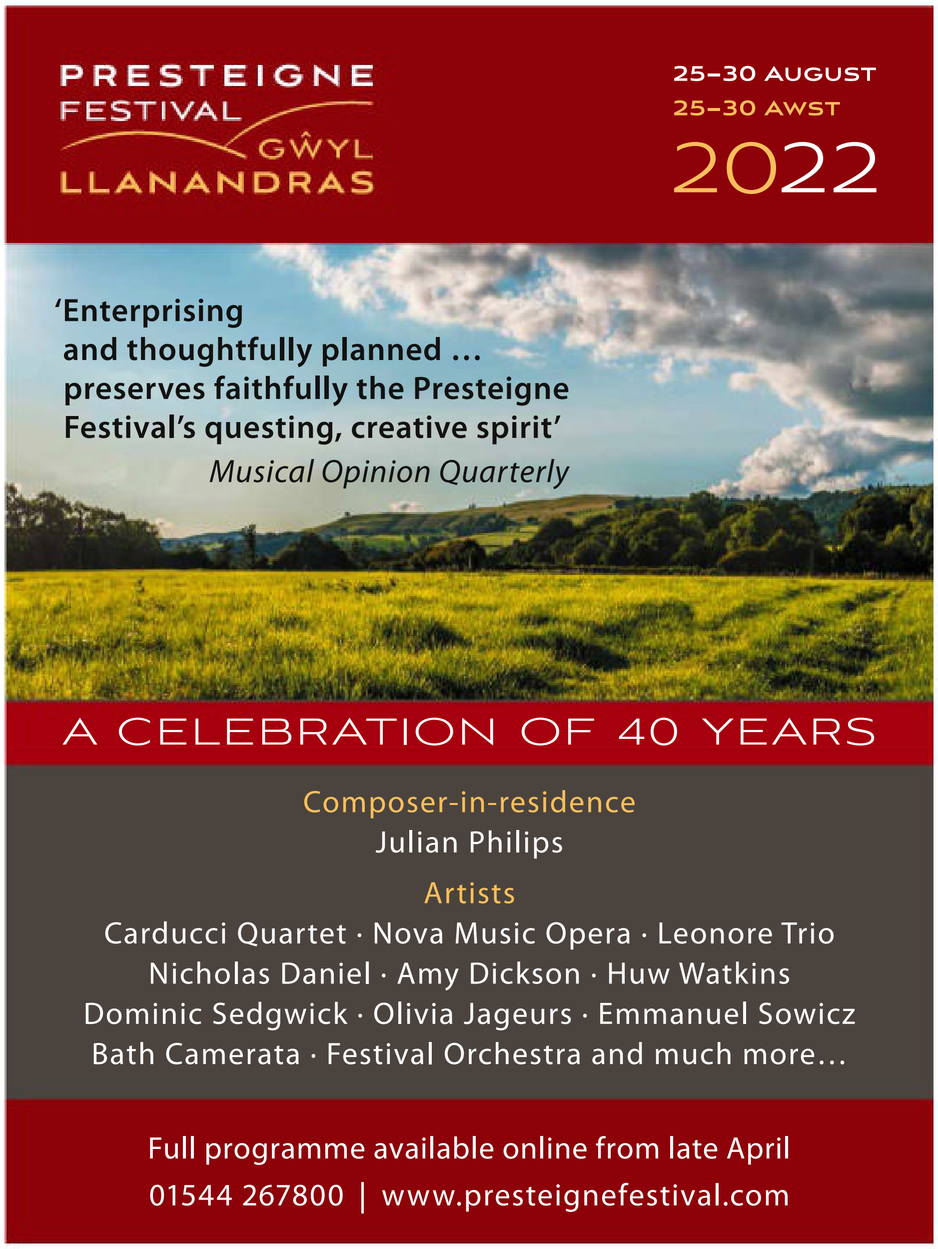
BIF Buxton International Festival

7 – 24 July 2022

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

MANCHESTER CAMERATA
THE JESS GILLAM ENSEMBLE
BRODSKY QUARTET
JENEBA KANNEH-MASON
THE CLARE TEAL SEVEN
THE ENGLISH CONCERT
CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN
GUY BARKER

BOX OFFICE **01298 72190** **BUXTONFESTIVAL.CO.UK**


PRESTEIGNE FESTIVAL
GŴYL LLANANDRAS
25–30 AUGUST
25–30 AWST
2022
'Enterprising and thoughtfully planned ... preserves faithfully the Presteigne Festival's questing, creative spirit'
Musical Opinion Quarterly
A CELEBRATION OF 40 YEARS
Composer-in-residence
Julian Philips
Artists
Carducci Quartet · Nova Music Opera · Leonore Trio
Nicholas Daniel · Amy Dickson · Huw Watkins
Dominic Sedgwick · Olivia Jageurs · Emmanuel Sowicz
Bath Camerata · Festival Orchestra and much more...
Full programme available online from late April
01544 267800 | www.presteignefestival.com

DARTINGTON MUSIC
SUMMER SCHOOL & FESTIVAL
Over 70 concerts and events set against the backdrop of a medieval estate in the heart of Devon.
23 July - 20 August
Explore the programme & book now:
DARTINGTON.ORG/MUSICFESTIVAL

LAKE DISTRICT SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL
29 JULY - 7 AUGUST 2022
BOOK YOUR ESCAPE TO THE LAKE DISTRICT
ELIAS QUARTET - LONDON TANGO QUINTET
ROBERT MURRAY - MARION CONSORT - GILDAS QUARTET
HERMES EXPERIMENT - LINOS PIANO TRIO & MORE
WWW.LDSM.ORG.UK | 01539 266200

Reaching for the skies: Jess Gillam plays Chichester; (left) Arun Ghosh's *Canticle of the Sun* comes to Bristol after Norfolk & Norwich

Aldeburgh! Extended by an extra week, it notches up 41 premieres and celebrates one of its own: composer Oliver Knussen, who would have been 70 this year. Tom Coult's opera *Violet*, originally due to premiere back in 2020, finally launches a festival fostering community on and off the concert platform. Violinist Nicola Benedetti appears in four guises; the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme receives a 50th-birthday shout-out; and among a cornucopia of visiting ensembles, the Doric Quartet performs a complete Bartók string quartet cycle over a day, mezzo Sarah Connolly premieres songs by Mark-Anthony Turnage, and pianist Vikingur Ólafsson makes his Snape debut.

Festival of Voice

Bristol, 2-26 June

Tel. +44 (0)117 929 4929

Web: www.stgeorgesbristol.co.uk

The initiative of St George's, Bristol's acoustically blessed intimate concert venue, the month-long festival explores the voice in all its diversity – from the London Adventist Chorale to tenor Mark Padmore pulling on his thermals for Schubert's *Winterreise*. Stile Antico ponders Elizabethan religious persecution in achingly subversive works by Byrd and Robert White; Arun Ghosh's *Canticle of the Sun* sets words by St Francis of Assisi; and the new vocal arm of Chineke! delves into the music of 16th-century Portuguese composer Vicente Lusitano.

ROBIN CLEWLEY, EMILE HOLBA

Festival of Chichester

Chichester, 11 June – 10 July

Web: www.festivalofchichester.co.uk

The city itself is the star of the show, insist the organisers of the Festival of Chichester, and it's a star with an all-consuming appetite. From Bach to the Blues, Ravel to Rock, it fields a month-long jamboree that takes in poetry, exhibitions and cinema along the way. In the Cathedral where Thomas Weelkes was once organist and Gustav Holst is buried, Leonard Elschenbroich plays the Elgar Cello Concerto with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Saxophonist Jess Gillam joins the London Mozart Players for Glazunov, and the Schumanns Robert and Clara absorb the Stradivarius Piano Trio.

Northern Aldborough Festival

Aldborough, 16-25 June

Web: www.aldboroughfestival.co.uk

It's turning out quite a year for Handel's *Theodora* (among others, the Royal Opera's new production at Covent Garden earlier this year); and, rescheduled from last year, Northern Aldborough isn't missing out. Directed by Joe Austin and conducted by Julian Perkins, Fflur Wyn takes the title role as the festival embarks on a bumper edition. It's not the only opera. John Tomlinson revisits John Casken's recent chamber opera *The Shackled King*. Clarinettist Julian Bliss, pianist Clare Hammond and guitarist Sean Shibe (in tandem with Quatuor van Kuijk) are all Aldborough bound – as is maestro of the Chinese *yangqin* (dulcimer), Reylon Yount.

Stour Music

Boughton Aluph, Kent, 17-26 June

Web: www.stourmusic.org.uk

Founded by countertenor Alfred Deller and continued by his son, Stour was a Deller family concern until 2019 when I Fagiolini's director Robert Hollingworth took over the reins. And in the festival's 60th-birthday year he's pushing the boat out – and hoping that Alfred will be smiling down. Rameau's *Castor et Pollux*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Purcell's *The Indian Queen* ensure no lack of drama in a festival beholden to Bach with the Swingle Singers and Marian Consort. Musica Secreta lifts the veil on 16th-century convent life, and an all-singing-and-dancing Tudor revelry sounds the off.

United Kingdom

St Magnus Festival

Orkney, 17-24 June

Tel. +44 (0)1856 871445

Web: www.stmagnusfestival.com

It might count composer Peter Maxwell Davies among its founding fathers, but the festival's midsummer magic has always cast its spell over a broad spectrum. Fables, stories and witches haunt an edition that includes a daily literary hour and a Tapestry Promenade. But music is never far away. Lotte Betts-Dean sings Maxwell Davies's scena *The Medium* and joins percussionists O Duo for Ligeti and Crumb; The Assembly Project gives the UK premiere of Paul Crabtree's opera *The Ghost Train*; and Tenebrae, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and pianist Clare Hammond swell an alluring guest list.

Walled City Festival

Derry/Londonderry, 23-26 June

Tel. +44 (0)2871 363 672

Web: www.walledcitymusic.com

Derry/Londonderry is fast turning into Northern Ireland's festivals central. In October, the tenth edition of the International Choir Festival will be raising voices once more, and July brings a Piano Festival with competition attached. But first, Walled City welcomes the Brodsky Quartet; the Ulster Orchestra in collaboration with Derry's own Acoustronic; and, from America, the Grammy-nominated Sandbox Percussion.

Orcadian invitation: pianist Clare Hammond comes to St Magnus

Peasmarsh Chamber Music Festival

Peasmarsh, Sussex, 23-26 June

Tel. +44 (0)1797 253178

Web: www.peasmarshfestival.co.uk

Originally the brainchild of the much-missed Florestan Trio, Peasmarsh is still co-directed by violinist Anthony Marwood and cellist Richard Lester. Quality control is a given! The village's Norman church is the hub of a festival that reaches out to Rye and Winchelsea, and this year invites the Heath Quartet, accordionist James Crabb and composer Sally Beamish, among others. Her *Carnival Samba – Floreant!* gets things off to a sizzling start and late-night tango spices up an eclectic programme that embraces Kurtág, Korngold and quintets by Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms.

Proms at St Jude's

Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 25 June – 3 July

Tel. +44 (0)20 3322 8123

Web: www.promsatstjudes.org.uk

There's rejoicing in NW11 as the imposing Lutyens Church of St Jude hails the 30th edition of its charity fundraising Proms season. Late-night comedy in the Refreshment Tent, Heritage Walks, and a lively Litfest augment A Night at the Opera with Nevill Holt Opera, Armonico Consort's musical recreation of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation and a stable of artists including Orchestra Nova and the Gould Trio.

East Neuk Festival

Fife, 29 June – 3 July

Web: www.eastneukfestival.com

When it comes to the weather, East Neuk goes with the flow. 'Thunderplump' (Scottish for a sudden, violent deluge) is the name of this year's 'Big Project' combining film and music, and the musicians buckling up for the return of the pop-up 'Band in a Van' will be hoping there will be no downpours. Schubert anchors a line-up that weaves confidently from Hollywood Swing to Syrian oud music, and festival regulars include pianists Elisabeth Leonskaja and Christian Zacharias, the Elias and Pavel Haas Quartets, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Coastal chords: East Neuk, Scotland, whose regulars include (right) Christian Zacharias

GETTY, PHILIP GATWARD

Deal Festival

Deal, Kent, 1-16 July

Tel. +44 (0)1304 370220

Web: www.dealmusicandarts.com

Wellies on! Cornwall comes to Kent as a music-theatre piece about The Lost Gardens of Heligan and a day devoted to the Goodwin Sands reinforce Deal's reputation for the eye-catching. In Sandwich, Handel's *Fireworks* and *Water Music* assemble a supersized band headed up by the Academy of Ancient Music; the Echéa Quartet with soprano Anna Cavaliero are backing Britten; and percussionist Evelyn Glennie jams

SALISBURY INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL
PART OF WILTSHIRE CREATIVE
27 MAY–18 JUNE
2022
BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW!
LET YOUR ISLAND ADVENTURE BEGIN
WILTSHIRECREATIVE.CO.UK
TICKET SALES 01722 320333
MAJOR SPONSORS
Wilsons Solicitors

STOUR MUSIC
17-26 JUNE 2022
60th Anniversary
Dunedin Consort
The Swingles • Musica Secreta
Spiritato & The Marian Consort
Purcell's Indian Queen
'TUDOR NIGHT' with The City Musick
and Fieri Consort • Tango Siempre
FESTIVAL of EARLY MUSIC in EAST KENT
www.stourmusic.org.uk
BOUGHTON ALUPH CHURCH

MUSIC IN THE ROUND
Sheffield CHAMBER MUSIC Festival
Curated by Helen Grime MBE
Focus on female artists and composers
Featuring Ensemble 360
Guests include Ruby Hughes, Joseph Middleton,
Sean Shibe and Karine Polwart
13–21 May 2022
Crucible Studio Theatre
and venues across the city
www.musicintheround.co.uk
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
Music in the Round is a registered charity no. 326811

ENGLISH HAYDN FESTIVAL 2022
28th Festival Year
THE CONSONE QUARTET
International soloists will feature at the English Haydn Festival featuring Crispian Steele-Perkins, violoncellist Pavel Serbin, violin virtuoso Simon Standage, oboist Mark Baigent, flautist Eva Caballero. bassoonist Robert Percival and violinist Ada Witczyk. In addition, the English Haydn Orchestra enhance a fascinating array of music based on the Festival's theme of :-
"Haydn's Innovations", with performances of his symphonies, and music by Schubert, Mozart and Beethoven, including a Flute Concerto by CPE Bach, violin romances by Beethoven and a symphony concertante by J C Bach, with the orchestra performing on period instruments conducted by the distinguished director Steven Devine. Lunchtime and evening Chamber concerts feature the Consone Quartet, the Salomon String Quartet, the English Haydn Piano Trio, and The Revolutionary Wind Machine.
Dates: 7th to 11th June 2022
Tel: 07547 289704. Or, buy tickets on-line
www.ticketsource.co.uk/haydn-festival-trust
Website: http://www.englishhaydn.com

BOOKING OPENS MAY 2022
ARCHEBU YN AGOR MAI 2022
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL & SUMMER SCHOOL
YOUR 2022 EICH
MUSICFEST GŴYL HAF
ABERYSTWYTH
23 - 30 JULY 2022
FEATURING ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA GUY JOHNSTON ALPESH CHAUHAN CATRIN FINCH DAVID CAMPBELL SOLEM QUARTET AYANNA WITTER-JOHNSON SACCONI QUARTET MARIA HEGELE AND MUCH MORE
MUSICFEST Aberystwyth
FIND OUT MORE AT MUSICFESTABERYSTWYTH.ORG, OR CALL BOX OFFICE ON 01970 62 32 32
BROUGHT TO YOU IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
TŶ CERDD

More than fifty years of world-class music in West Wales
Dros 50 mlynedd o gerddoriaeth ardderchog yng ngorllewin Cymru
Fishguard and West Wales
International Music Festival
Gŵyl Gerdd Ryngwladol
Abergwaun a Gorllewin Cymru
2022
Saturday 20 August - Saturday 10 September
Dydd Sadwrn 20 Awst - Dydd Sadwrn 10 Medi
Three weeks of the finest orchestral, chamber, folk and world music
Programme and tickets ¦ Rhaghlen a thocynnau:
www.fishguardmusicfestival.com 07941 510889

CHELTENHAM
Music Festival
8-16 July 2022
Box Office 01242 850270
cheltenhamfestivals.com/music
#CheltMusicFest
Featuring:
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Anoushka Shankar & Britten Sinfonia, Sheku & Isata Kanneh-Mason, Tenebrae, London Mozart Players, New English Ballet Theatre, Manchester Collective, The English Concert, Brodsky Quartet, Martin James Bartlett, Ingrid Fliter, Mahan Esfahani, Samuele Telari, Laura Bowler, Conor Mitchell, BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists and much more

Siblings on stage: Isata and Sheku Kanneh-Mason duet at Cheltenham; (below) Rachel Podger plays Baroque at Lichfield

with Trio HTK. Ukrainian pianist Dinara Klinton, meanwhile, plays the complete Prokofiev Sonatas over three recitals.

JAM on the Marsh Festival

Romney Marsh, Kent, 7-17 July
Tel. +44 (0)800 988 7984
Web: www.jamconcert.org

There will be cake twice over as Judith Bingham celebrates her 70th birthday and clarinettist Michael Collins his 60th – blowing out candles together as he premieres her new Clarinet Concerto. Inspired by literary landscapes, it's not the only literary celebration afoot. The centenary of *Façade*, Walton's experimental collaboration with Edith Sitwell, enlists tenor James Gilchrist and soprano Lucy Crowe; Voces8 bring their customary polish to the party; and Changeling Theatre insists on *The Importance of Being Earnest* – something probably lost on the creators of *Façade*!

Lichfield Festival

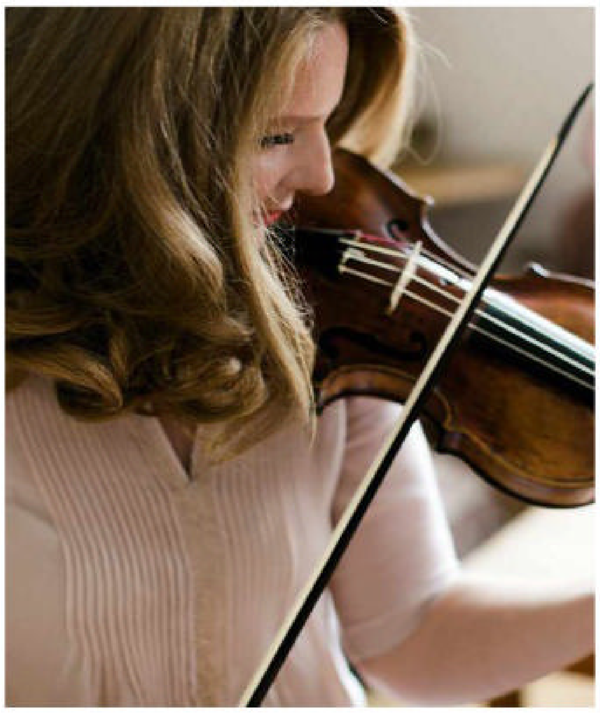
Lichfield, 7-17 July
Tel. +44 (0)1543 306271
Web: www.lichfieldfestival.org

For a festival turning 40, Tallis's 40-part motet *Spem in alium* is something of a go-to. Lichfield doesn't resist, but performs it with a piece specially commissioned from Thomas Hyde and Vaughan Williams's G minor Mass. Featured in the very first festival, VW's *Tallis Fantasia* returns the BBC National Orchestra of Wales to the Cathedral, where there's late-night candlelit Baroquerie from violinist Rachel Podger. Stephen McNeff's chamber opera *Beyond the Garden* puts out new shoots; and by way of a toast, Oz Clarke and Armonico raise a 'Gin and Phonic'.

Buxton International Festival

Buxton, 7-24 July
Tel. +44 (0)1298 72190
Web: www.buxtonfestival.co.uk

There's much more to Buxton than opera – a new jazz strand for a start, not



to mention a blue-chip concert series spotlighting the likes of countertenor Iestyn Davies, the Mithras Trio, Fretwork and the English Concert. But with Frank Matcham's revered theatre on standby, opera has long cut a distinctive dash. And Buxton isn't shy about going out on a limb. Rossini's Walter Scott-inspired *La donna del lago* spearheads five productions, among them – hot-footing it from Aldeburgh – Tom Coult's *Violet*.

York Early Music Festival

York, 8-16 July
Tel. +44 (0)1904 658338
Web: www.ncem.co.uk

After two years online, York can't wait to establish 'Connections' – 2022's theme. But, as director Delma Tomlin observes, it's just as much about 'reconnecting' music, artists and audiences. Returning by way of grand finale is the Young Artists Competition, whose entrants can be inspired by visiting ensembles such as The Gonzaga Band and the Rose Consort of Viols. The Tallis Scholars trace links between Josquin, Byrd and Palestrina; and the Gabrieli Consort and Players recreate the 1595 coronation of Marino Grimani as Doge of Venice.

Cheltenham Festival

Cheltenham, 8-16 July
Tel. +44 (0)1242 850270
Web: www.cheltenhamfestivals.com

It opens with a relative whisper – duos from Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason – and closes with the mightiest of roars: Mahler's 'Symphony of a Thousand'. Cheltenham has never bought into the notion that one size fits all. And, ranging from early music to over 20 premieres, variety is stitched into programming that encourages horizontal listening in Gloucester Cathedral where, among others, Manchester Collective and accordionist Samuele Telari create a live mixtape. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, English Concert and London Mozart Players complement solo recitals and chamber music from the likes of pianist Ingrid Fliter, the Brodsky Quartet and soprano Lucy Crowe. While in Tewkesbury Abbey, Tenebrae celebrates 20 years of choral excellence with Poulenc's harrowing a cappella work for double choir, *Figure humaine*.

GETTY, THERESA PEWAL

United Kingdom

BBC Proms

London, 15 July – 10 September

Web: www.bbc.co.uk/proms

And then there were eight! After last year's slightly truncated Proms season it's eight-weeks-business-as-usual as the prommers return. Full details will be announced on 26 April, but it's safe to assume that anniversarians Vaughan Williams, Xenakis and George Walker will not be overlooked.

Ryedale Festival

North Yorkshire, 15-31 July

Tel. +44 (0)1751 475777

Web: www.ryedalefestival.com

Mindful of the Vaughan Williams anniversary, Ryedale is moved to consider the relationship between music and place. And when it comes to places, Ryedale is spoilt for choice, from York Minster to Castle Howard, Scarborough Spa to Ampleforth Abbey. Handel's *Acis and Galatea* embarks on a Dales churches crawl, while in the Minster Mark Elder conducts his Hallé forces and soloists including mezzo Alice Coote in Verdi's Requiem. New works by Errollyn Wallen, Tarik O'Regan and Roxanna Panufnik are in prospect, as well as pianist Stephen Kovacevich, the Maxwell Quartet and The Gesualdo Six.

King's Lynn Festival

King's Lynn, 17-30 July

Tel. +44 (0)1553 764 864

Web: www.kingslynnfestival.org.uk

Ryedale isn't the only festival with Vaughan Williams on its radar. In 1905, the composer was in King's Lynn where a tour of local hostelries, family homes and the North End fisherfolk resulted in a fine haul of folk songs that fed into the three *Norfolk Rhapsodies* and *A Sea Symphony*. *The Lark Ascending* soars in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's closing night concert; and Spiritato and Ensemble Hesperi gild the traditional Early Music Day. For those of a non-nervous disposition, in the Guildhall where Shakespeare is reputed to have trodden the boards, Minima accompanies a screening of Murnau's 1922 Expressionist classic *Nosferatu*.

Music at Paxton

Berwick-on-Tweed, 22-31 July

Web: www.musicatpaxton.co.uk

Perched loftily above the River Tweed, Palladian Paxton House has been dispensing choice chamber music from its well-stocked picture gallery since 2006. There will be tales to tell as it engages with Visit Scotland's 'Year of Stories' and the irrepressible Maxwell Quartet are once more 'in residence'. Pianist Pavel Kolesnikov remembers the Proust centenary with works by Reynaldo Hahn, Fauré and Franck. There's more Fauré from BBC New Generation Artists the Mithras Piano Trio; and Paxton signs off with Mozart, Bach and Chopin from pianist Angela Hewitt.

Dartington Summer Music School and Festival

Totnes, Devon, 23 July – 19 August

Web: www.dartington.org

Dartington is in its element this year. And not just one. Director Sara Mohr-Pietsch themes each of the four weeks of concerts around Water, Fire, Earth and Wind, all brought together by the fifth element 'aether', the essence of music itself, she suggests. Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Gavin Bryars's *Jesus' Blood never failed me yet* are claimed by 'Water'; Handel's oratorio *Athalia* catches 'Fire'; 'Earth' yields Shostakovich string quartets from the Brodskys and the Brahms Requiem; while 'Air' buoys up pianist Rolf Hind and a concluding 'hurrah' for Vaughan Williams 150.

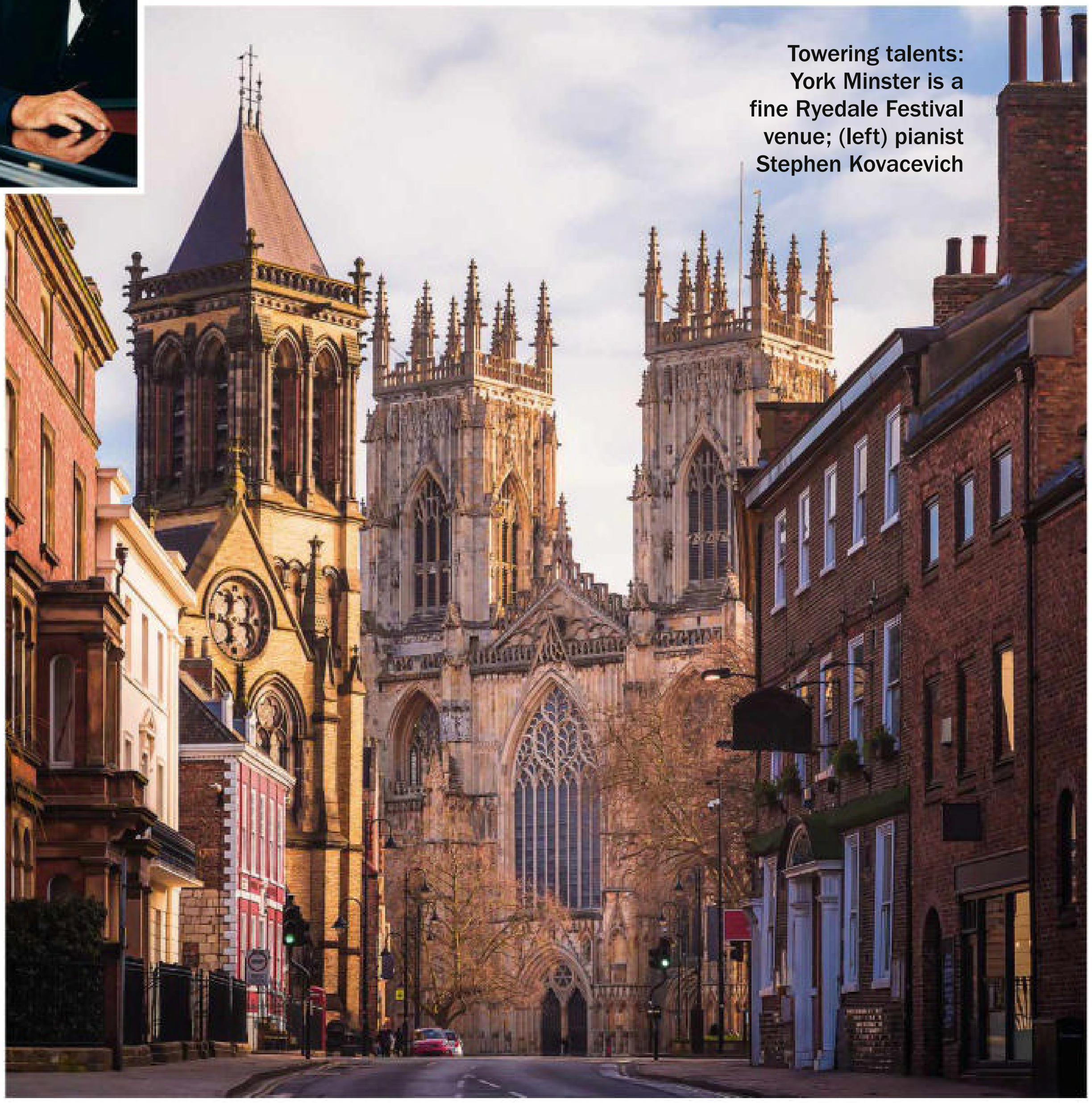
Three Choirs Festival

Hereford, 23-30 July

Tel. +44 (0)1452 768928

Web: www.3choirs.org

Gloucestershire-born Vaughan Williams was closely identified with the Three Choirs Festival, which premiered no fewer than nine of his works. So in anniversary year, Hereford launches a celebration that will carry through to Gloucester in 2023. 2022, meanwhile, is bookended by Dvořák's Requiem



Towering talents: York Minster is a fine Ryedale Festival venue; (left) pianist Stephen Kovacevich

LARS BORGES, DAVID THOMAS, GETTY

and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. Stabat Mater settings by Poulenc and Richard Blackford are mingled with arrangements of Bach by Stravinsky, Webern and Elgar. And there's a rare chance to hear Finzi's *Dies Natalis* in its original incarnation for soprano.

Lake District Summer Music

Cumbria, 29 July – 7 August

Tel. +44 (0)1539 266201

Web: www.ldsm.org.uk

What with an al fresco pop-up *Lark Ascending* tour, the *Serenade to Music* and a slimmed down *Sinfonia antartica* twinned with *Towards the Unknown Region*, there's no danger that Vaughan Williams 150 is being overlooked in the Lakes. But in Ambleside, the Marian Consort proposes 'Music for the Queen of Heaven'; Nic Pendlebury's electric viola is 'In the Dock' (the Dock Museum, Barrow) for music by Steve Reich and Terry Riley; and composer in residence Cecilia McDowall is generously represented. Add in The Hermes Experiment, Elias Quartet and Linos Piano Trio, and the hills of the north have plenty of reason to rejoice.

Snape Proms

Snape Maltings, 31 July - 31 August

Tel. +44 (0)1728 687110

Web: www.brittenpearsarts.org

With Aldeburgh's June Festival extended to three weeks, there's scarcely time to draw breath before Snape's month-long popular postscript beckons. Family events on the outdoor Dome Stage and a generous helping of jazz, rock and folk music don't elbow out a classy classical cohort. Joining the Britten Sinfonia with trumpeter Alison Balsom, the Emerson Quartet and guitarist Miloš Karadaglić, Cuarteto Casals plays Haydn, Stravinsky and Dvořák; and, under Sir Simon Rattle, the LSO prefaces Bruckner's Symphony No. 7 with Sibelius.

Suffolk strings: guitarist Miloš Karadaglić plays at Snape Proms

Edinburgh International Festival

Edinburgh, 5-28 August

Tel. +44 (0)131 473 2000

Web: www.eif.co.uk

It's about to be all change at Edinburgh Festival. After eight years as director, Fergus Linehan steps down, and next year's festival will be the first under violinist Nicola Benedetti. Linehan bows out at a historic moment: it's the Festival's 75th anniversary, and there will be residencies by Theater Amsterdam, the Philharmonia and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Operas include Dvořák's *Rusalka* starring Welsh soprano Natalya Romaniw and Strauss's *Salome* with Swedish soprano Malin Byström in the title role; and there's symphonic Beethoven and Florence Price from the Philadelphia under Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

Clandeboye Festival

Bangor, County Down, 19-27 August

Tel. +44 (0)28 9042 7600

Web: www.camerata-ireland.com

Twentieth-anniversary Clandeboye lost some of its international artists to travel restrictions last summer, but it didn't dampen the celebrations. Schubert and Debussy come under the gaze of its sequel, as artistic director Barry Douglas reinvites soprano Ailish Tynan and horn player Richard Watkins. He himself concludes the festival in the role of pianist, directing Camerata Ireland from the keyboard in Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto; and in a solo recital he pairs Schubert's Four Impromptus with Prokofiev. The traditional Celtic Celebration night will doubtless have Irish eyes smiling, and music by Polish composer Penderecki spikes the chamber programme.

Presteigne Festival

Presteigne, 25-30 August

Tel. +44 (0)1544 267800

Web: www.presteignefestival.com

For its 40th anniversary, Presteigne, set amid the Welsh Marches, is pulling out all the stops. Ten specially commissioned works include a piece from composer in residence Julian Philips for Nova Music Opera. Tarik O'Regan, David Matthews and Huw Watkins send birthday wishes, spurred on by the Carducci Quartet, oboist Nicholas Daniels and the Festival Orchestra under Presteigne's director, George Vass.

Lammermuir Festival

East Lothian, 8-19 September

Tel. +44 (0)131 226 0004

Web: www.lammermuirfestival.co.uk

Although Lammermuir doesn't nail its colours to the mast until June, Scotland's Sunshine Coast and hills, made famous by Sir Walter Scott, will relish the return of pianist Jeremy Denk to play Ives and Bach. Quatuor Mosaïques leans into Haydn and Schubert; there's Sibelius from the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; and Mozart monopolises the Dunedin Consort.

Investec International Music Festival
Celebrating Vaughan Williams in the Surrey Hills
5-14 May 2022
WORLD-CLASS MUSIC · WORLD PREMIERES · WALKS · TALKS
Sitkovetsky Trio & Friends
Modigliani Quartet
Gary Hoffman cello & Wu Qian piano
Michael Collins clarinet & Friends
Investec International Music Festival In the Surrey Hills
www.iimf.co.uk
Surrey Hills International Music Festival is a Registered Charity No.1171264

MUSIC@MALLING
Outstanding music in historic venues
22nd September - 2nd October 2022
www.musicatmalling.com
General Enquiries: 0345 3191043

Rye Arts Festival
A FULL CLASSICAL MUSIC PROGRAMME
FROM LEADING YOUNG MUSICIANS
9-25TH SEPTEMBER 2022
ryeartsfestival.org.uk
Rye Arts Festival CIO Reg Charity No. 1175309

INTERNATIONAL COMPOSERS FESTIVAL 2022
Performing the world's most exciting classical music being written today
20–22 MAY
De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex
Box Office www.dlwp.com
www.composersfestival.com

LONDON PIANO FESTIVAL
'A major event in the musical calendar, thanks to the charismatic guests brought in by the pianistic duo who conceived it'
The Independent
6-9 Oct 2022
Imogen Cooper
Tamara Stefanovich
Vijay Iyer
Noriko Ogawa
Paul Roberts
Dominic Degavino
Festival Directors:
Katya Apekisheva
Charles Owen
Tamara Stefanovich
kingsplace.co.uk/lpf
Bach | Schubert | Liszt | Debussy | Shostakovich | Messiaen | Iyer | and more
KINGS PLACE

peasmarsh22
PEASMARSH CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL 23-26 June 2022
Anthony Marwood / Richard Lester / Sally Beamish / James Crabb / Magnus Johnston / Ori Kam / Hannes Minnaar / Heath Quartet / 12 Ensemble
Inspiring Music in Beautiful Surroundings with Concerts in Peasmarsh, Rye & Winchelsea
BOX OFFICE 01797 253178 www.peasmarshfestival.co.uk East Sussex

THAXTED FESTIVAL
• EST 1916 •
17 June – 10 July 2022
Summer concerts in Thaxted Parish Church, Essex
London Mozart Players
Claire Martin and her Trio
King's College London Choir & English Chamber Orchestra
Roderick Williams
Eric Lu, piano
See website for full programme: thaxtedfestival.co.uk
A timeless musical experience

CORBRIDGE CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
28-31 July 2022
Gould Piano Trio
Robert Plane
Roberto Carrillo-Garcia
Piers Hellawell
Sinéad Morrisey
Elias String Quartet
Wonderful music in a stunning Northumbrian village
www.corbridgefestival.co.uk

UK Summer Opera

Water view: Garsington will provide a lakeside home to *Rusalka*, among others

Glyndebourne

Lewes, East Sussex, 21 May – 28 August

Tel: +44 (0)1273 815 000

Web: www.glyndebourne.com

After last year's *Tristan und Isolde*, Glyndebourne renews its Cornish credentials, but with a real rarity: an opera written in French, premiered in German, admired by Mahler and sharing with Britten's *Peter Grimes* the simmering tensions of village life played out against the elemental churn of the sea. Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers* makes its festival debut in the French original version directed by Melly Still and conducted by Robin Ticciati. Ticciati also presides over summer's finale: a Poulenc double bill juxtaposing *La voix humaine* with the risqué delights of *Les mamelles de Tirésias*. Between the bookends are Michael Grandage's 2012 update of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* to Franco's Spain; Glyndebourne's first new production in two decades of Puccini's *La bohème*; and a revival of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. Casting a Baroque spell is Handel's *Alcina*, conducted by Jonathan Cohen with Jane Archibald as the sorceress.

Longborough Festival Opera

Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, 30 May – 2 August

Tel: +44 (0)1451 830292

Web: www.lfo.org.uk

Aiming to forge a complete *Ring* cycle by 2024, Longborough passes the halfway stage with resident Wagnerian maestro Anthony Negus conducting Amy Lane's production of *Siegfried*. There's more ripe Germanic Romanticism as Korngold's anniversary prompts a semi-staged *Die tote Stadt*. Composers Freya Waley-Cohen and Francesca Caccini go head-to-head in a double bill, while Bizet's *Carmen* turns Cotswold heads.

Opera Holland Park

London, 31 May – 13 August

Tel: +44 (0)300 999 1000

Web: www.operahollandpark.com

Hunkering down beneath its state-of-the-art canopy, Opera Holland Park brings a taste of country house opera to the capital. New productions of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Bizet's *Carmen* launch the season, while the adventurous will relish Sian Edwards conducting the UK premiere of Mark Adamo's adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, and Martin Lloyd-Evans directing an eye-catching double-bill of Delius's *Margot la Rouge* and the young Puccini's stage debut, *Le Villi*. Six song recitals, meanwhile, widen the perspective to encompass an alternative composite portrait of Carmen, and all three Schubert Lieder cycles, including

Sounds of the sea: at Glyndebourne, Robin Ticciati conducts Smyth's *The Wreckers*

STEPHEN WRIGHT, RICHARD HUBERT SMITH, KATIE PONDER, RICHARD WORKMAN

Errollyn Wallen's newly composed response to *Schwanengesang*.

Garsington Opera

Wormsley Estate, Buckinghamshire, 1 June – 31 July

Tel: +44 (0)1865 361636

Web: www.garsingtonopera.org

From its 18th-century walled garden to historic in-house cricket pitch, Wormsley has its attractions; in summer, opera has pride of place in the airy, purpose-built Pavilion. New for 2022 is Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*: Laurence Cummings conducts the English Concert, whose instrumentalists also underpin Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Dvořák's *Rusalka* is another festival debutant alongside Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* and a specially commissioned community opera by Roxanna Panufnik and Jessica Duchen.

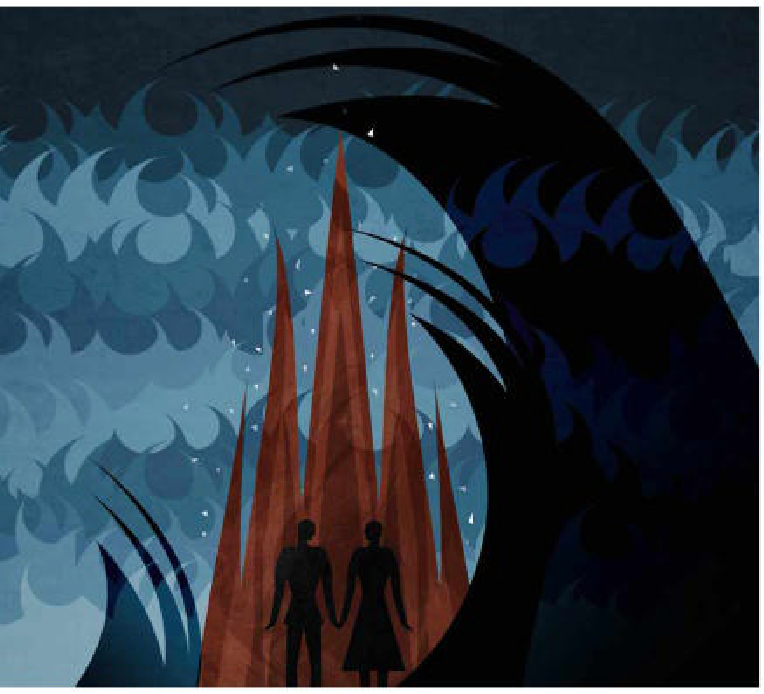
Nevill Holt Opera

Market Harborough, Leicestershire, 8 June – 10 July

Tel: +44 (0)1858 437451

Web: www.nevillholtopera.co.uk

Surrounded by sumptuous gardens complete with contemporary sculpture, Nevill Holt has boasted its own award-winning opera house since 2018. After last year's enforced retreat into the great outdoors, the stage is set for Puccini's *La bohème* and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. They're wrapped around an eclectic mini-festival ranging from The Swingles and Sam Jewison's take on The Great American Songbook to saxophonist Jess Gillam, the Manchester Collective and Handel from the Dunedin Consort.



Waterperry treat: Jonathan Dove's *Mansfield Park*

The Grange Festival

Alresford, Hampshire, 9 June – 14 July

Tel: +44 (0)1962 791020

Web: www.thegrangefestival.co.uk

Standing classically proud (if a little incomplete) over the Hampshire countryside, The Grange is in globetrotting mood, starting in the Scotland of Verdi's *Macbeth*, with Gezim Myshketa and Judith Howard as the scheming power couple. Thence to Tartary where Handel's Tamerlano (Raffaele Po) is on the emotional rack, before the Tower of London's portcullis is raised on Christopher Luscombe's new production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Yeomen of the Guard*.

Grange Park Opera

West Horsley Place, Surrey, 9 June – 16 July

Tel: +44 (0)1962 737373

Web: www.grangeparkopera.co.uk

An adroit choice of four operas starts with Verdi's *Otello*, with Gwyn Hughes Jones as the Moor and Simon Keenleyside as his slippery sidekick. Venice also supplies the backdrop to Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* starring Joseph Calleja, while Janáček's *Mr Brouček* heads to the moon in a production by David Pountney. And for two nights only, skippered from the pit by Anthony Negus, Bryn Terfel weighs anchor in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*.

Dorset Opera Festival

Bryanston, Dorset, 25-30 July

Tel: +44 (0)1258 840000

Web: www.dorsetopera.com

Sporting an international intake, the Summer School is up and running once more, supplying the chorus and technical backup to the operatic class of 2022: Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. And for those hungry for more, 'Bluffers' Lunches' give background lowdown with conviviality.

Bampton Classical Opera

Bampton, Oxfordshire, 22 July – 16 September

Tel: +44 (0)1993 851142

Web: www.bamptonopera.org

'Fool Moon' might be taking liberties with the title of Haydn's *Il mondo della luna*, but the Oxfordshire-based company has always treated the Esterháza Kapellmeister with respect and the extravagant wedding offering will be Bampton's third excursion into Haydn's penchant for setting Goldoni.

Waterperry Opera

Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, 12-20 August

Tel: +44 (0)7543 108386

Web: waterperryoperafestival.co.uk

Jonathan Dove's *Mansfield Park* has become something of a Waterperry institution, and this summer's revival is prefaced with a UK tour. But Jane Austen isn't the only belle of the fifth-anniversary ball. Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* plants its flag on the front lawn; and there are more pre-wedding jitters in the UK premiere of Ana Sokolović's *a cappella* opera *Svadba*. 'Wagner at Twilight' and a staging of Janáček's song cycle *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* enlarge a vintage celebration.

IF Opera

Belcombe Court, Bradford-on-Avon, 19 August – 17 September

Tel: +44 (0)1225 868 124

Web: www.ifopera.com

Four years after relocating to the Georgian Belcombe Court, erstwhile Iford Opera has reinvented itself as IF Opera, with a remit to tour as well as maintain the much-cherished festival. Clare Teal heads up the traditional Picnic Prom; Christian Curnyn conducts a Purcellian postscript; an interactive family show indulges in a spot of moon-gazing; and operatic honours go to Puccini's *La Rondine* and a comic double-bill of Donizetti (*Rita*) and Wolf-Ferrari (*El segreto di Susanna*).

if opera

Opera | Proms | Concerts
19 August - 17 September 2022

La rondine Puccini
Rita & Il segreto di Susanna Donizetti | Wolf-Ferrari
Dido and Aeneas Purcell
Picnic Prom with The Clare Teal Seven
The Man in the Moon Family show

Celebrating great music in extraordinary places | Book online at ifopera.com

Performances take place in the stunning grounds of Belcombe Court, and Holy Trinity, in the historic town of Bradford on Avon. Picnicking available at opera and prom events. Ticket prices from £19.

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

BRITTENPEARS ARTS

Book tickets: aldeburghfestival.co.uk

NEWBURY
Spring
FESTIVAL
7- 21 May
FEATURING
BBC Symphony Orchestra
London Mozart Players
4 Girls 4 Harps
Imogen Cooper
VOCES8
The Sixteen
YolanDa Brown
& many more...
TWO WEEKS OF WORLD-CLASS MUSIC
Box Office: 0845 5218 218
Calls cost 2p per minute plus your telephone company's Access Charge
newburyspringfestival.org.uk

MUSIC FESTIVAL
CHIPPING CAMPDEN
7 TO 21 MAY
2022
Mark Padmore Mitsuko Uchida Florilegium
Emanuel Ax Henning Kraggerud Adrian Brendel
Imogen Cooper Julian Bliss David Pollard Paul Lewis Chineke! Quatuor Modigliani Thomas Hull
Ruth Rogers Steven Isserlis Richard Goode
Alim Beisembayev Ex Cathedra
The Festival Academy Orchestra
"to hear concerts of outstanding quality in such a setting is the purest joy."
Bernard Haitink
CAMPDENMAYFESTIVALS.CO.UK

THE DORSET OPERA
FESTIVAL
MMXXII
The home of Country House opera in South West England featuring renowned soloists and full orchestra
Marquee Bar | Picnics | Formal Dining
Giacomo Puccini
MANON LESCAUT
25, 28, 30 July at 19:00 | Matinée 27 July at 14:00
Sung in Italian with English surtitles
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
THE MAGIC FLUTE
26, 27, 29 July at 19:00 | Matinée 30 July at 14:00
Sung in English with surtitles
Coade Theatre, Bryanston, Blandford Forum
Box Office:
dorsetopera.com
07570 366 186

Europe

Italian splendour: the San Vitale is just one of Ravenna Festival's attractions

Dresden Festival

Dresden, Germany, 11 May – 10 June

Tel. +49 (0)351 6560 6700

Web: www.musikfestspiele.com

There's magic in the air for the 45th edition of Dresden Festival's month-long jamboree, corralling some 1,500 artists and a swathe of historic venues in its 66 concerts. Opening night features a multi-media production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* directed by Roman Coppola; and there's more sorcery from Thomas Adès who premieres a suite from his opera *The Tempest*. With cellist Jan Vogler as the festival's artistic director, 'Cello Mania' returns, culminating in a 'Long Night of the Cello' mustering nearly 20 cellists including the likes of Mischa Maisky, Gautier Capuçon, Sol Gabetta, Pablo Ferrández and Sheku Kanneh-Mason.

Prague Spring Festival

Prague, Czech Republic, 12 May – 3 June

Tel. +420 461 049 232

Web: www.festival.cz/en

Smetana's *Má Vlast* might be mandatory to launch a Prague musical spring, but the festival has never been proprietorial. This year, national pride is entrusted to Daniel Barenboim and his West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, and they're not the only visiting orchestral heavyweights. Andris Nelsons conducts the Vienna Philharmonic and François-Xavier Roth prioritises versatility, with Debussy from his period instrument orchestra Les Siècles, not to mention conducting Janáček and Strauss with Gürzenich-Orchester Köln. Freiburg Baroque makes Bachian common cause with Vox Luminis, while Klangforum Wien rounds off the contemporary music strand.

Bergen International Festival

Bergen, Norway, 25 May – 8 June

Tel: +47 55 21 06 30

Web: www.fib.no

Bergen wears its 70 years lightly. After the opening al fresco sing-along, it's down to business with the world premiere of an orchestral arrangement of Taylor Mac's *A 24-decade history of popular music*, described as a 'mash-up of music, history, performance and art that were popular throughout the country from 1776 to the present day'. The Bergen Philharmonic also engages in a bit of time travel, in the company of Roomful of Teeth, in Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and a new work by Caroline Shaw. Strauss's *Salome* and a stripped-down operatic take on Dante's *Purgatorio* offset piano music in Grieg's parlour, and an evening of Grieg, Strauss and Wagner from Norwegian soprano Lise Davidsen.

Handel Festival Halle

Halle, Germany, 27 May – 12 June

Tel. +49 (0)345 565 2706

Web: www.haendelhaus.de

His statue looms large over Halle's market square, and for 100 years the town of his birth has hosted a bespoke festival. For its centenary, Christian Curnyn conducts a new production of *Orlando*; Il Pomo d'Oro uncages 'Handel's Bestiary'; and a clutch of gala concerts showcase the likes of Philippe Jaroussky (as conductor), countertenor Iestyn Davies and Jordi Savall's Le Concert des Nations.

Blackwater Opera Festival

Lismore, Ireland, 31 May – 6 June

Web: blackwatervalleyoperafestival.com

To the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness belongs Ireland's most famous opera festival: Wexford. But in summer, Lismore Castle is the hub for an ambitious relative newcomer. The Irish Baroque Orchestra and CoisCéim Dance Theatre under conductor Peter Whelan perform the Vienna version of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, while in the converted barn at Dromore Yard, pianist Giovanni Bellucci unpacks the Orpheus myth.

Festival de Saint-Denis

Paris, France, 31 May – 3 July

Tel. +33 (0)1 4813 1210

Web: www.festival-saint-denis.com

Dividing its musical largesse between the lofty Gothic basilica – final resting place to many French kings and queens – and the Napoleonic Maison d'éducation de la Légion d'honneur, Festival Saint-Denis demonstrates a nose for musical royalty. Stabat Mater settings by Rossini, Pergolesi and Poulenc are threaded through a programme during which Patricia Kopatchinskaja multitasks as violinist and vocalist in Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*; and, at the piano, Simon Rattle partners Magdalena Kožená and friends in works by Chausson, Stravinsky and Janáček.

Ravenna Festival

Ravenna, Italy, 1 June – 21 July

Tel. +39 (0)544 249211

Web: www.ravennafestival.org

'Sacred and profane' is the Ravenna watchword as Azio Corghi's *Between flesh and heaven* issues an opening night summons to a festival remembering the centenary of Pier Paolo Pasolini. Mozart's *Don Giovanni* will have something to add in the autumn as part of a Da Ponte trilogy. But summer's harvest includes Brahms from Iván Fischer's Budapest Festival Orchestra, Ian Bostridge singing Britten and, planting themselves firmly on the side of the angels, Riccardo Muti and his Cherubini Youth Orchestra bowing their heads in prayer alongside Mozart, Vivaldi and Verdi.

Principal attractions: Lismore Castle, home of Blackwater Opera Festival; (below) Lise Davidsen at Bergen

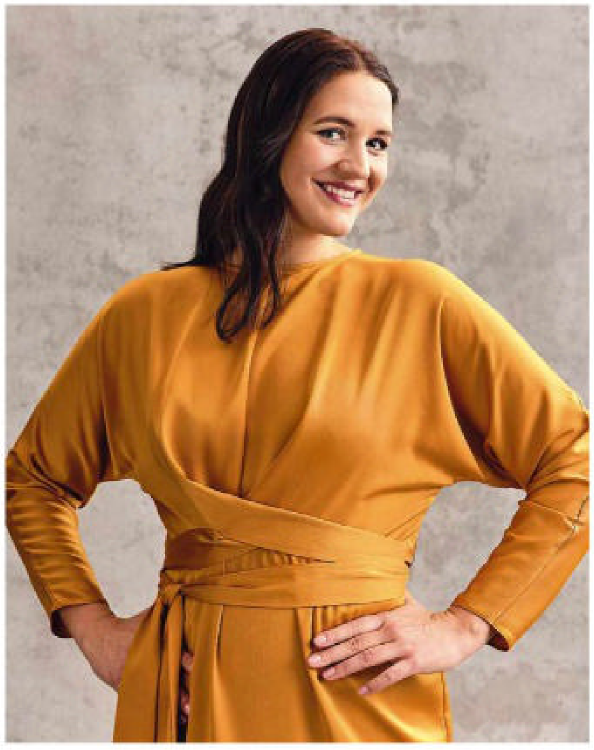
JENNY CARBONI, GETTY, JAMES HOLE

Reykjavík Arts Festival

Reykjavik, Iceland, 1-19 June

Tel. +354 561 2444

Web: www.listahatid.is



Having collaborated with Iceland Opera on February's sadly abandoned production of Wagner's *Die Walküre* (it would have been Iceland's first), Reykjavík's biennial festival steps up a gear with June's focus on the new. Mixing music with visuals, the Spektral Quartet gives the Iceland premiere of Anna Thorvaldsdóttir's *Enigma*, and soprano-conductor Barbara Hannigan joins the Iceland Symphony Orchestra for a collision of Ives, Schoenberg, Berg and Gershwin.

Holland Festival

Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 3-26 June

Tel. +31 (0)20 523 7787

Web: www.hollandfestival.nl

Like its Edinburgh cousin, the Holland Festival was born out of a desire to foster international dialogue following World War II. Seventy-five years on, dialogue remains at its core – alongside a penchant for the new and nearly new. Both inform an anniversary edition rescuing Sami Yusuf's *When Paths Meet* from its 2020 cancellation. Uniting western classical and Arab-Andalusian traditions it also brings together Cappella Amsterdam and the Amsterdam Andalusian Orchestra. Heiner Goebbels's 'imaginary notebook for large orchestra', *A House of Call*, elevates eavesdropping to a fine art; and multi-lingual associate artist Angélique Kidjo injects an African perspective.

Financial Support: Ministerstvo Kultury, Praha Prague Praga Prag
Festival Partner: innogy / Powered by MVM
Concert Partner: Subterra
Technology Partner: CETIN člen skupiny PPF
General Media Partner: Česká televize
Main Media Partner: Český rozhlas
Media Partner: Hospodářské noviny
Official Car

Istanbul Music Festival

Istanbul, Turkey, 6-24 June

Web: https://muzik.iksv.org

Istanbul notches up its half-century, and why wouldn't it give itself a pat on the back with Fazil Say's 'Istanbul' Symphony? Ferit Tüzün's *Capriccio à la Turque* launches the festival in the company of Rachmaninov and Bernstein, while Musica Sequenza turns the clock back to 'Rameau à la Turque'. Among other delights, Daniel Hope and Alexey Botvinov premiere Tan Dun's Double Concerto for violin and piano, and countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński is in the mood for love, Baroque style.

The reign in Spain: Tabea Zimmermann, artist-in-residence at Granada; (left) Ian Bostridge sings at Festival O/Modernt

Bachfest Leipzig

Leipzig, Germany, 9-19 June

Tel. +49 (0)1806 999000 345

Web: www.bachfestleipzig.de

Who knew? In only two years the Johann Sebastian Bach Forest has planted six hectares with over 33,000 trees. And it's not just the Forest that's cultivating sturdy rootstock. Leipzig '22 is looking at Bach's own musical roots in the works of Buxtehude, Reincken, Bruhns and, in his anniversary year, Schütz. The 300th birthday of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* entices Angela Hewitt and András Schiff; and under the motto 'We are Family', the entire Bach clan is celebrated by artists including John Eliot Gardiner's Monteverdi Choir, Les Arts Florissants and Amsterdam Baroque.

Festival O/Modernt

Stockholm, Sweden, 10-16 June

Web: https://omodernt.com/festival

Violinist Hugo Ticciati's shape-shifting festival has been playing with preconceptions for a decade now and, as the 10th edition prepares to colonise the Ulriksdal Palace's rococo theatre, Haydn and the 'un/conditioned ear' come in for attention. The Marmen Quartet juxtaposes choice Haydn string quartets with music by Widmann and Webern, and tenor Ian Bostridge and baritone Florian Boesch lend vocal heft to a closing performance of *The Seasons*.

MARCO BORGGREVE, KALPESH LATHIGRA

Granada Festival

Granada, Spain, 13 June – 10 July

Tel. +34 958 22 18 44

Web: granadafestival.org

From the exotic Alhambra Palace to the Generalife terraces, Moorish Granada hosts this 71st festival edition. Last year's celebrations are extended into 2022's outing, which is mindful of the Concurso de Cante Jondo instigated by Federico García Lorca. Martha Argerich and Charles Dutoit team up with the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic for Ravel's G major Piano Concerto, and violist Tabea Zimmermann is artist-in-residence.

Munich Opera Festival

Munich, Germany, 19 June – 31 July

Tel. +49 (0)89 2185 1025

Web: www.staatsoper.de

Serge Dorny is the incoming artistic director of Bavaria's annual summer operatic frenzy. He certainly cuts a dash with his opening choice: Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun*. A Straussian foursome includes *Capriccio* (premiered in the Nationaltheater 80 years ago) and, to end, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Other 20th-century operas include Shostakovich's *The Nose* and Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Away from the operatic stage, 'on song' are Christian Gerhaher (three times over), Jonas Kaufmann and Anja Harteros.

Wagner 22

Leipzig, Germany, 20 June – 14 July

Tel. +49 (0)341 1261 261

Web: www.oper-leipzig.de

JS Bach isn't Leipzig's only musical son. The newly married Schumanns lived here, and their friend Felix Mendelssohn spent a dozen years as Gewandhauskapellmeister. But Richard Wagner was actually born in the city, and Leipzig's opera festival is indulging itself in a three-week chronological presentation of all 13 of his operas – save for the *Ring*, which is performed on four consecutive nights.

Europe

Aria Borealis Bodø

Bodø, Norway, 24 June – 2 July
Tel. +47 7554 9000
Web: www.ariaborealis.com
Wrapped around an international singing competition, Baroque music is the raison d'être for Bodø's fledgling biennial. Located just within the Arctic Circle, one of the world's most northerly cities welcomes an illustrious clutch of Nordic ensembles including Concerto Copenhagen, the Finnish Baroque Orchestra and Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble. But they don't have it all to themselves. The opening night dreams of Neapolitan sunshine in the company of Christina Pluhar's L'Arpeggiata.

West Cork Chamber Music Festival

Bantry, Ireland, 24 June – 3 July
Tel. +353 (0)27 52788
Web: www.westcorkmusic.ie
Set in ravishing gardens overlooking the sea, Bantry House fell silent as a live-concert venue in 2020 when the festival was compelled to move online. Only now is it throwing open its aristocratic doors to the chamber music festival once more. It should be quite some reunion. Artists include the Doric and Pavel Haas quartets, Ensemble Vintage Köln and composer Brett Dean.

Savonlinna Opera Festival

Savonlinna, Finland, 1-31 July
Tel. +358 (0)15 476 750
Web: operafestival.fi
Opera and the medieval castle nuzzling Finland's most spectacular lake have been an item for well over a century, and a more recent tradition summons audience members to their seats with a trumpet fanfare from *Aida*. This year, there's more than just a fanfare. A new production of Verdi's Egyptian tragedy beckons, alongside Puccini's *Tosca*, Bizet's *Carmen* and Savonlinna's first foray into Handel, *Giulio Cesare*. Busoni's 1913 opera *Arlecchino* – in a double bill with Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* – receives its Finnish premiere.

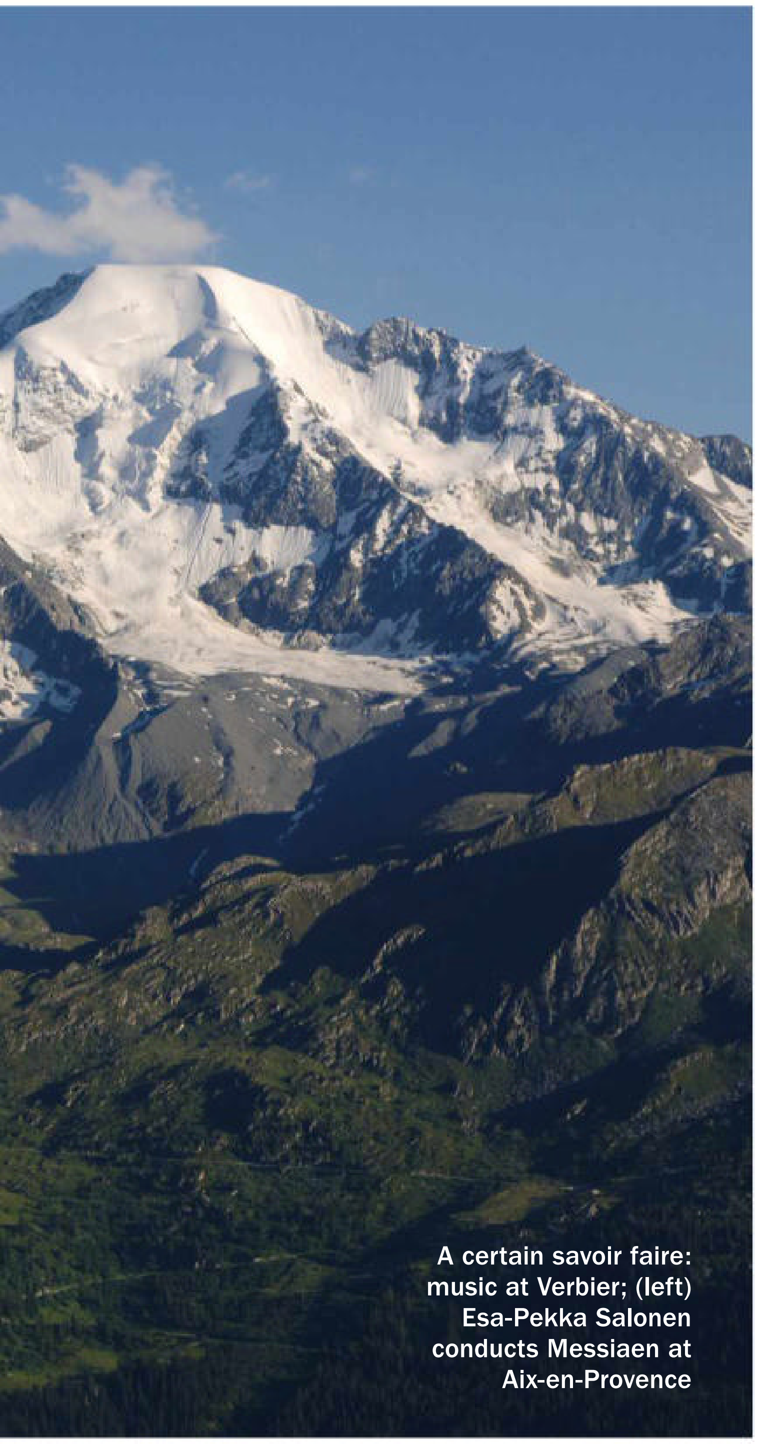
GETTY, TIBOR BOZI

Aix-en-Provence Festival

Aix-en-Provence, France, 4-23 July
Tel. +33 (0)4 3408 0217
Web: festival-aix.com
Travel – literal and metaphorical – is at the heart of what Aix is about this year. And it doesn't get more metaphorical than Mahler's 'Resurrection' Symphony, staged by Romeo Castellucci in the abandoned modernist Stadium de Vitrolles. It's the first of ten productions that include the world premiere of Pascal Dusapin's *Il Viaggio, Dante*, a journey in seven scenes through *The Divine Comedy;* and in the exquisite courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace, Mozart's *Idomeneo* is performed by Raphaël Pichon's Pygmalion (who also undertake Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*). In the Grand Théâtre de Provence, meanwhile, Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts Messiaen's *Turangalîla Symphony* to mark 30 years since the French composer's death.

Rosendal Chamber Music Festival

Baroniet Rosendal, Norway, 7-10 July
Tel. +47 53 48 29 99
Web: www.baroniet.no
Pianist Leif Ove Andsnes probably feared that his carefully plotted Beethoven celebration for the 2020 Festival was lost forever, but happily it lives on as a stellar set of colleagues convene in the fjord-side 17th-century manor house. Among them are pianists Vikingur Ólafsson and Kristian Bezuidenhout, violinist Alina Ibragimova and soprano Dorothea



A certain savoir faire: music at Verbier; (left) Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts Messiaen at Aix-en-Provence

Celebrating Beethoven: Kristian Bezuidenhout joins Leif Ove Andsnes and friends at Rosendal

Röschmann. Hardanger fiddle heralds the 'Kreuzer' Sonata, while jazz musician Marius Neset's 2020 Festival commission is coming home.

Dubrovnik Summer Festival

Dubrovnik, Croatia, 10 July – 25 August

Tel. +385 (0)20 326 100
Web: www.dubrovnik-festival.hr

It's not just the weather that can turn hot and sultry in a Dubrovnik summer. The city's venerable arts festival is awash with passion, with Lorca's play *Blood Wedding* leading the charge. The Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra flies the home flag alongside the Zagreb Quartet and, performing Monteverdi's *Vespers* of 1610, the Antiphonus Vocal Ensemble. But there are visitors too, including guitarist Miloš Karadaglić and Spanish soprano Núria Rial.

Pärnu Music Festival

Pärnu, Estonia, 13-22 July

Web: www.parnumusicfestival.ee

Seaside Pärnu is no stranger to musicians. Shostakovich and David Oistrakh used to summer here and in 2010 conductor Paavo Järvi co-founded a Festival and Academy that could cheerfully appropriate Bachfest Leipzig's 2022 moto: 'we are family'. His father Neeme Järvi celebrates his 85th birthday in June and conducts the opening night concert. Paavo spearheads four concerts with the Festival Orchestra, and the Baltic Sea Philharmonic makes its Pärnu debut under Paavo's brother Kristjan. Soloists include violinist Joshua Bell.

Gstaad Menuhin Festival

Gstaad, Switzerland, 15 July – 3 September

Tel. +41 33 748 8182
Web: www.gstaadmenuhinfestival.ch

Alpine Gstaad aims high. 'Wien, Beethoven Delayed' is the theme, recovering some of 2020's lost programme with conspicuous style. René Jacobs conducts the RIAS Kammerchor Berlin and Freiburger Barockorchester for opening night's *Missa Solemnis,* and Jonas Kaufmann is Florestan to Anja Kampe's Leonora in a concert performance of *Fidelio* conducted by Jaap van Zweden. Vienna is no mere backdrop to the festivities however. Accordion meets mandolin in Ksenija Sidorova's and Avi Avital's trip 'from Vienna to Rio de Janeiro', while Il Pomo d'Oro plumbs *Sturm und Drang*. Violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Il Giardino Armonico, meanwhile, court the Viennese Vivaldi.

Verbier Festival

Verbier, Switzerland, 15–31 July

Tel. +41 (0)21 925 9060
Web: www.verbierfestival.com

Located high in the Swiss Alps, Verbier is a festival on top of the world. And with the Academy and Festival Orchestra as its backbone, a heady mix of masterclasses and youthful orchestral passion fuel a programme that doesn't stint on chamber music or solo recitals – among the latter, a debut by the 11-year-old Tsotne Zedginidze who plays piano works by Janáček, Bartók and Scriabin as well as his own music. He's in elevated company. Other visiting pianists include Martha Argerich, András Schiff, and jazz giant Brad Mehldau (who accompanies Ian Bostridge in Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and his own cycle *The Folly of Desire*). Concert performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, and Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* bring opera to the Salle des Combins; and, under Charles Dutoit, Verbier

WEST CORK
CHAMBER MUSIC
FESTIVAL 2022
BANTRY, CO. CORK, IRELAND
24 JUNE - 3 JULY
www.westcorkmusic.ie
ireland.com
WILD ATLANTIC WAY
Cork County Council
PURE CORK

New Ross
Piano
Festival
2022 21st–25th September
SAVE THE DATES FOR 2022
This Irish festival under the artistic direction of pianist Finghin Collins is bringing some tempting events to South East Ireland. For instance Tamara Licheli, well-respected pianist and festival organizer, comes from Georgia, and two familiar names will visit from the UK – Jonathan Plowright and the Albion Quartet. François-Xavier Poizat is a Swiss pianist new to Ireland, and the famous American jazz pianist, Craig Taborn will be the star of the Jazz Piano Day.
newrosspianofestival.com
festivals
RTÉ arts
Wexford County Council
IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

FESTIVALS
Malta
MALTA
JAZZ
FESTIVAL
11-16 July 2022
festivals.mt
Featuring
Danny Grissett Trio, John Scofield's "Yankee Go Home",
Joel Ross "Good Vibes".

Fondazione
ARENA DI VERONA
99° Arena di Verona Opera Festival
17th June/
4th September
2022
OPERA
Carmen
Aida
Nabucco
La Traviata
Turandot
GALA
Roberto Bolle
and Friends
Carmina Burana
Domingo
in Verdi Opera
Night
HEADS Collective
Fondazione Arena di Verona reserves the right to make changes to the current program.
The most
Italian place
on Earth™
arena.it
Major partner
UniCredit
Automotive partner
VOLKSWAGEN
Official sponsor
CALZEDONIA
RANA
Mobility partner
DB
Media partner
RTL 102.5

Europe

takes its leave with Kodály, Prokofiev and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

Salzburg Festival

Salzburg, Austria, 18 July – 31 August

Tel. +43 662 8045 500

Web: www.salzburgfestival.at

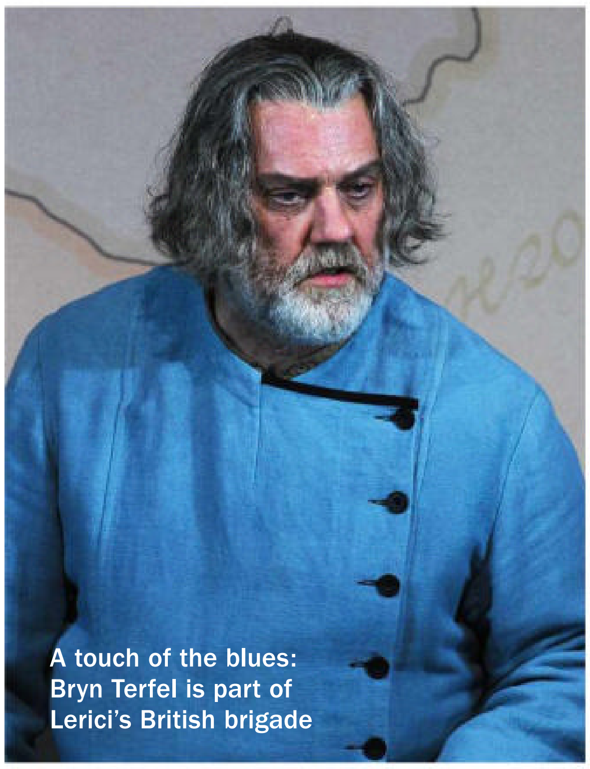
Prefaced by the customary 'Ouverture Spirituelle', which this year contemplates 'sacrifice' in works ranging from Lassus to Shostakovich's 'Babi Yar' Symphony, Salzburg is a festival that likes to keep busy. Nearly 230 performances are dispersed across 45 days and 17 venues, ranging from the Cathedral Square to the repurposed Summer Riding School – where Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* is paired with Orff's *De temporum fine comoedia* at the start of an opera programme that includes a concert performance of Wolfgang Rihm's *Jakob Lenz*. The Philharmonics of Berlin and Vienna are joined by Teodor Currentzis's musicAeterna, the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh Symphony who, under Manfred Honeck, play Ligeti, Beethoven and Mahler.

Lerici Music Festival

Lerici, Italy, 22 July – 14 August

Tel. +39 3791379677

Web: www.lericimusicfestival.com



A touch of the blues: Bryn Terfel is part of Lerici's British brigade

Two hundred years ago, local resident Percy Bysshe Shelley drowned off the Ligurian coast, and the town's recently-founded festival has a strong British flavour as it remembers the tragedy. Byron, DH Lawrence and Virginia Woolf were all once visitors and visiting the festival this year are bass-baritone Bryn Terfel, trumpeter Alison Balsom and pianist Christian Blackshaw. Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* salutes Shelley, and opera boasts something of a rarity: Walton's comic one-acter *The Bear*.

Haapsalu Early Music Festival

Haapsalu, Estonia, 28-31 July

Web: www.studiovocale.ee

French harpsichordist Jean Rondeau was demolishing musical barricades at last year's festival in the genial seaside spa town – a festival that celebrates its 30th birthday next year. This time he has an 18th-century Everest to scale: Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. And there's more Bach in a concert of motets and cantatas by Voces Tallinn. Haydn falls to Concerto Copenhagen and the recently formed Quartet M4gnet, while the Tenebrae Consort laments with Tallis.

Itinéraire Baroque

Cercles, France, 28-31 July

Tel. +33 (0)6 4770 0825

Web: www.itinerairebaroque.com

It started life as a day's musical pilgrimage to five ancient churches dotted about the verdant Périgord region, and some 20 years on director Ton Koopman's celebration of the Baroque has kept faith with that original vision, even if the festival has expanded. Seventeenth-century music for the French Chapel Royal is performed by La Grande Chapelle, and the closing concert lassoes Koopman's Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra in an all-Bach line-up

Keeping busy: Salzburg this year is a hive of activity

GETTY

including the Suite No. 1, BWV 1066, and *Brandenburg Concertos* Nos 3 and 4.

Lucerne Festival

Lucerne, Switzerland, 9 August – 11 September

Tel. +41 (0)41 226 4400
Web: www.lucernefestival.ch

Not content with launching a year-round digital platform, the flagship summer festival inaugurated a Spring edition this year, orbiting Mendelssohn and conducted by the Festival Orchestra's music director Riccardo Chailly. Come August, however, the Festival Orchestra is only one of nearly 20 local and visiting orchestras – among them the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras. Wolfgang Rihm currently leads the Festival Academy established by Pierre Boulez almost two decades ago, and this year's composer-in-residence is Thomas Adès, who conducts the Festival Contemporary Orchestra in the premiere of his new piece for violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter. Bookending the festival is Chineke!, whose youth orchestra sets the ball rolling and whose original incarnation brings things to a close with Nabors, Shostakovich and William Levi Dawson.

Carl Nielsen Festival

Odense, Denmark, 26-30 August

Tel. +45 4449 2900
Web: www.carlnielsenfestival.com

There's a new festival in town, and it's devoted to local-lad-made-good, Carl Nielsen. He was born just south of Odense on the island of Funen, and while the city hosts the visiting orchestras – not to mention the Odense Symphony Orchestra's Prom – local Funen manor houses sustain the chamber music element. The Oslo Philharmonic and violinist Isabelle Faust bestow Berg, Nielsen and Mahler on the debut event, and violinist Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider joins cellist Gautier Capuçon and the WDR Symphony Orchestra for the Brahms Double Concerto. Trio Con Brio Copenhagen and the Danish Quartet lead the chamber music making.

Wratislavia Cantans

Wrocław, Poland, 9-17 September

Tel. +48 71 715 97 00
Web: www.nfm.wroclaw.pl

From Simon Rattle to Iván Fischer, the roster of musicians queueing up to heap praise on Wrocław's concert hall complex speaks volumes. Every September, it provides the focal point for a festival devoted to the human voice that fans out into the city's historic interiors and neighbouring towns. 'Dangerous Liaisons' is the banner for 2022; and among those liaising dangerously are soprano-conductor Barbara Hannigan and the Ludwig Orchestra, pairing Poulenc and Strauss; the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique who, under John Eliot Gardiner, perform Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*; and, lending period instrument expertise, Il Giardino Armonico.

ARIA
BOREALIS
BODØ
ariaborealis.com
June 24 – July 2, 2022
Welcome to the north of Norway for a unique Early Music festival in stunning surroundings! New international singing competition, exciting concerts, interesting talks and courses for all levels and ages
L'Arpeggiata, Dame Emma Kirkby, Stefan Herheim, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Rolf Lislevand, Bjarte Eike, Anders J Dahlin, Tuuli Lindeberg, Maja Ratkje, Concerto Copenhagen, Barokkanerne, Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble, The Finnish Baroque Orchestra
NORDIC BAROQUE SCENE
STORMEN
ARIA BOREALIS BODØ

Creative Oundle
International Festival
JULY 8–16 2022
creativeoundle.co.uk
David Walliams
AWFUL AUNTIE
OPEN AIR THEATRE
A WEEK of Fantastic Events including: Party at the Wharf Ronnie Scott's All Stars Awful Auntie Merry Hell Classico Latino The Umbrellas of Cherbourg Twelfth Night Open Gardens and Much More!
Creative Oundle International Festival

hull
International Choir Competition
April 27 - May 1, 2023 | Hull, Great Britain
AN INTERKULTUR EVENT
hull
INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION
interkultur.com/Hull2023

PÄRNU MUSIC FESTIVAL
13-22/07/2022
CELEBRATING
THE 85TH BIRTHDAY OF
NEEME JÄRVI
with
PAAVO JÄRVI
KRISTJAN JÄRVI
ESTONIAN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA
TALLINN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
and guest soloists
www.parnumusicfestival.ee

THE BIRGIT NILSSON DAYS
8-13 August 2022
MASTERCLASS, STIPENDIUM & FESTIVAL CONCERTS
Experience Birgit Nilsson´s legacy at her home on the Bjäre Peninsula in South Sweden.
Follow in Birgit´s footsteps...
Visit the Museum. Walk the country lanes she loved. Hear the next generation of singers she inspired.
birgitnilssondagarna.com
BIRGIT NILSSON
MUSEUM

WEXFORD
FESTIVAL OPERA
21 OCTOBER | 6 NOVEMBER 2022
HALÉVY | SCRIBE
LA TEMPESTA
DAVID | CARRÉ, LUCAS
LALLA-ROUKH
DVOŘÁK | VRCHLICKÝ
ARMIDA
SHUT YOUR EYES AND SEE
JAMES JOYCE
MAGIC & MUSIC
1 FESTIVAL | 17 DAYS | 80 EVENTS
DISCOVER MORE AND BOOK NOW AT
WWW.WEXFORDOPERA.COM

North America

Breaking boundaries: Marin Alsop conducts the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia; (right) Herbie Hancock at Gilmore; (below right) Rhiannon Giddens's *Omar* premieres at Spoleto

PATRICK GIPSON, EBRU YILDIZ, TIMOTHY TEAGUE, GETTY

Gilmore Piano Festival

Kalamazoo, MI, 24 April – 15 May

Tel. +2 269 342 1166

Web: www.thegilmore.org

Biennial Gilmore sees things in black and white – the keys of the piano, that is! No one could accuse it of narrow-mindedness, though. Igor Levit, Daniil Trifonov and Beatrice Rana might be soaking up Michigan's hospitality, but the opening night goes to jazz legend Herbie Hancock. Chopin stalks recitals by Rana, Jan Lisiecki and Emanuel Ax; concertos enlist four guest orchestras; and the finale stages a 3:2:1 countdown: Bach's Triple Concerto BWV1063, Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos, and Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 performed by Ingrid Fliter.

Long Play Festival

Brooklyn, NYC, 29 April – 1 May

Tel. +1 718 852 7755

Web: www.bangonacan.org

From Loud Weekend to summer's two-week festival at MASS MoCA, there's no stopping the irrepressible Bang on a Can – they introduced themselves back in 1987 with an epic day-long Marathon, after all. Long Play promises 'more kinds of musicians playing more kinds of music'. The music straddles John Luther Adams and Stockhausen, Brian Eno, Captain Beefheart and Ornette Coleman. Performers include the Attacca Quartet, Noise Saxophone Quartet and, of course, the Bang on a Can All Stars.

May Festival

Cincinnati, OH, 20-28 May

Tel. +1 513 381 3300

Web: www.mayfestival.com

Next year notches up the 150th anniversary of the very first May Festival, and the Festival Chorus remains key to what is styled as the longest continuously running choral festival in the Western Hemisphere. Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 crowns a programme bestriding the Americas, Katharina Wincor makes her festival debut conducting Bernstein's *Candide*, and Juanjo Mena heads south to conduct Ginastera, Villa-Lobos and Estévez. To open, it's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas as John Adams spearheads his Nativity oratorio *El Niño*.

Spoleto Festival USA

Charleston, SC, 27 May – 12 June

Tel. +1 843 579 3100

Web: www.spoletousa.org

Composer Gian Carlo Menotti knew what he was doing when he alighted on Charleston in which to establish a US answer to his Italian festival in Spoleto. Its old-world elegance delights, especially at festival time. Menotti the opera composer would doubtless cheer on the world premiere of *Omar* by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels, a slave tale close to home; and, in the Gaillard Center, Puccini's *La bohème* will be re-imagined. Ligeti's Piano Concerto is framed by the US premieres of works by

North America

Edmund Thornton Jenkins and Anna Thorvaldsdottir; and the Spoleto Festival USA Chorus takes an inaugural bow with works by Bruckner, Brahms and Britten.

Ravinia Festival

Highland Park, IL, June – September (dates TBC)

Tel. +1 847 266 5100

Web: www.ravinia.org

Marin Alsop returns to Ravinia as chief conductor at the head of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. And she's bringing a compact 'Breaking Barriers' Festival this year celebrating women conductors – as well as music such as Michael Daugherty's *Time Machine* for three conductors and Bernstein's 'Kaddish' Symphony. Elsewhere, Alsop conducts Beethoven, Richard Strauss, and, featuring soprano Yeree Suh and baritone Matthias Goerne, Brahms's *German Requiem*.

Come As You Are

Atlanta, Georgia, 2-19 June

Tel. +1 404 881 8801

Web: www.atlantaopera.org

Whoever said opera is a museum culture hasn't told Atlanta Opera. In the run up to its Come As You Are festival, Mason Bates's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* lifts the lid on the founder of Apple. And in the Big Tent, bolstered by panel discussions and talkbacks, the musical *Cabaret* is interleaved with Laura Kaminsky's transgender chamber opera *As One*. Baritone Lucia Lucas is 'Hannah Before', and mezzo-soprano Blythe Gaissert is 'Hannah After'.

Ojai Festival

Ojai, CA, 9-12 June

Tel. +1 805 646 2094

Web: www.ojaifestival.org

John Adams oversaw last year's 75th-anniversary edition – relocated to September. And AMOC (American Modern Opera Company) is in the driving seat as June normality returns. Not that 'normality' is the word where the ever-dynamic, re-inventing Ojai is concerned. Newly composed works include *Family Dinner* by Matthew Aucoin and *the echoing of tenses*, a specially commissioned song cycle by Anthony Cheung. Soprano Julia Bullock stars in a semi-staging of Messiaen's *Harawi*, and early music ensemble Ruckus reinvigorates the Baroque.

California dreaming: the Ojai Festival welcomes concert goers to the Libbey Bowl

Music Academy of the West

Santa Barbara, CA, 13 June – 6 August

Tel. +1 805-969-4726

Web: www.musicacademy.org

Otto Klemperer and Lotte Lehmann were early supporters of a summer school and festival that's in celebratory mood. For its 75th birthday, Santa Barbara parties in style with a 'Welcome Concert' in the Bowl, not to mention a gala featuring three-times Grammy Award winner, mezzo Isabel Leonard. Opera returns to the Festival with Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*; and among those California dreamin' are conductors Stéphane Denève and Hannu Lintu, plus composers Nico Muhly and Tom Cipullo.

Tanglewood

Lenox, MA, 17 June – 4 September

Tel. +1 617 266 1200

Web: www.tanglewood.org

Tanglewood's backstory can be traced in the names of its concert halls, from the orchestral focus of the Koussevitzky Music Shed to Seiji Ozawa Hall, award-winning home to much of the summer's chamber music. Ringo Starr fires the starting pistol and, under Andris Nelsons, the Boston Symphony's opening night acknowledges a towering Tanglewood stalwart – Leonard Bernstein. Among eight world and US premieres are works by Helen Grime and Caroline Shaw, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* issues a deadly dinner invitation and pianist Emanuel Ax and friends pursue 'Pathways from Prague' while Garrick Ohlsson readies himself for the complete piano works of Brahms.

Oregon Bach Festival

Eugene, OR, 17 June – 5 July

Tel. +1 541 346 5666

Web: www.oregonbachfestival.org

There's a gladiatorial frisson as OBF returns to live performance. Three contenders are in the frame for the artistic directorship, and each will conduct a major work and be put through their chamber music paces. The B minor Mass and the *John* and *Matthew Passions* are the Bachian pillars anchoring the likes of *The Musical Offering* directed by Monica Huggett. But Bach isn't the only composer in town. Paola Prestini's *Let Me See The Sun* receives its premiere; Tyler Duncan sings Schubert's *Winterreise*; and Akoka 'reframes' Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*.

Caramoor Festival

Katonah, NY, 18 June – 7 August

Tel. +1 914 232 1252

Web: www.caramoor.org

From intimate beginnings, Caramoor has grown, its ambitions consummated in ▶

North America

Mahler in the mountains: Bravo! Vail hosts no less than four top orchestras

the creation of an airy Venetian Theater and atmospheric Spanish Courtyard to complement the Music Room's opulence. Summer '22 should go with a bang as Michael Gordon's site-specific *Field of Vision* for 40 percussionists is premiered. Yo-Yo Ma and The Knights signal the off; soprano Dawn Upshaw and the Brentano Quartet collaborate on Melinda Wagner's monodrama *Dido Reimagined*; and Marc-André Hamelin ends the season royally with Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto.

Bard Summerscape and Music Festival

Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, 23 June – 14 August

Tel. +1 845 758 7900

Web: www.fishercenter.bard.edu

Sheltering beneath Summerscape's cross-disciplinary umbrella, the 32nd Bard Music Festival is devoted to 'Rachmaninov and his World'. The 'Whose century?' concert provocatively sets Piano Concerto No. 4 in the context of Respighi, Grofé, Shostakovich and Messiaen; and the *Vespers* should apply balm to the soul. Richard Strauss's comic opera *Die schweigsame Frau*, conducted by Leon Botstein and directed by Christian Räth, lightens the mood, while Molière's 400th is not forgotten.

Bravo! Vail

Vail, CO, 23 June – 4 August

Tel. +1 877 812 5700

Web: www.bravovail.org

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra returns to augment the reigning Bravo triumvirate of the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Dallas Symphony. Six weeks of full-on music making follows, and a new commissioning project yields three world premieres to add to the tally of eight local premieres. Paired with wine-tasting, 'classically uncorked' toasts ear-opening juxtapositions, while from New York hails Mahler's 'Resurrection' Symphony; Philadelphia humours Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*; and choice chamber music implicates artists-in-residence Hélène Grimaud and Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider.

Light music: Renée Fleming sings Puts at Aspen

ZACH MAHONE, ANDREW ECCLES

Domaine Forget International Festival

Sainte-Irénée, Québec, Canada, 25 June – 20 August

Tel. +1 418 452 8111

Web: www.domaineforget.com

For nearly half a century, festival goers have been making their way to the heights of Saint-Irénée, overlooking the St Lawrence River. Some 12,000 visitors flocked last year, attracted by the open vistas, the famous Sculpture Garden, and a feast of music and dance enriched by the superlative Academy. Helping to shape a Québécois summer this year are conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin, flautist Emmanuel Pahud, pianist Louis Lortie and Les Violons du Roi.

Aspen Music Festival and School

Aspen, CO, 30 June – 21 August

Tel. +1 970 925 3254

Web: www.aspenmusicfestival.com

It's just as well that Aspen stakes a claim on the Benedict Music Tent, intimate Joan and Irving Harris Concert Hall and the Wheeler Opera House. With over 400 concerts spread across eight weeks, it doesn't let the grass grow under its feet. Renée Fleming sings Kevin Puts's *The Brightness of Light*; Bryn Terfel heads the cast for Verdi's *Falstaff*; and Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* preoccupies Vasily Petrenko. To end, there's a sacred showstopper like no other: conceived for a huge orchestra corralling four offstage brass groups, Berlioz's *Grande Messe des morts* is conducted by Robert Spano.

Colorado Music Festival

Boulder, CO, 30 June – 7 August

Tel. +1 303 440 7666

Web: www.coloradomusicfestival.org

Hunkering down in the shadow of the Rocky Mountains, the Chautauqua Auditorium has been welcoming visitors for well over a century. In summertime it convenes members of over 40 national and international orchestras, who assemble under conductor Peter Oundjian for a festival that matches its spectacular surrounds. John Adams is this year's composer-in-residence and his Beethoven-inflected *Absolute Jest* for string quartet and orchestra falls to artists-in-residence the Takács Quartet on the first night. Jan Lisiecki undertakes a complete Beethoven piano concerto

cycle, and the Colorado premiere of a fanfare by Wynton Marsalis heralds Mahler's Symphony No. 5.

Santa Fe Opera

Santa Fe, NM, 1 July – 27 August
Tel. +1 505 986 5900
Web: www.santafeopera.org

Love is in the air, and with fatal consequences as a new production of *Carmen* launches another summer of opera under a New Mexico sky. Love can contrive a happy ending, however, or so insists Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*; and there's guile aplenty in Verdi's *Falstaff*, directed by David McVicar. But love is writ large and tragically as Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* makes its belated House debut. Simon O'Neill and Tamara Wilson take the title rolls and the staging, conducted by James Gaffigan, is by Zack Winokur and Lisenka Heijboer Castañón. Completing the line-up is *M. Butterfly*, Huang Ruo's operatic take on David Henry Hwang's Tony Award-winning play.

Maverick Concerts

Woodstock, NY, 1 July – 11 September
Tel. +1 845 241 7721
Web: www.maverickconcerts.org

Set in dappled woodland, Maverick's iconic barnlike concert hall has been dispensing chamber music (and, latterly, jazz and contemporary music) for over a century. The name isn't worn lightly. This year's theme is 'Freedom and Joy', making bedfellows of Duke Ellington and Haydn. 'Voices of colour' is also part of the characteristically eclectic remit. The Nexus ensemble celebrates its half-century, and to a roster of string quartets – including the Escher, Harlem and Borromeos – are added oud virtuoso Simon Shaheen and jazzers including Jerome Jennings. And César Franck's bicentenary does not go unremarked.

Blossom Music Festival

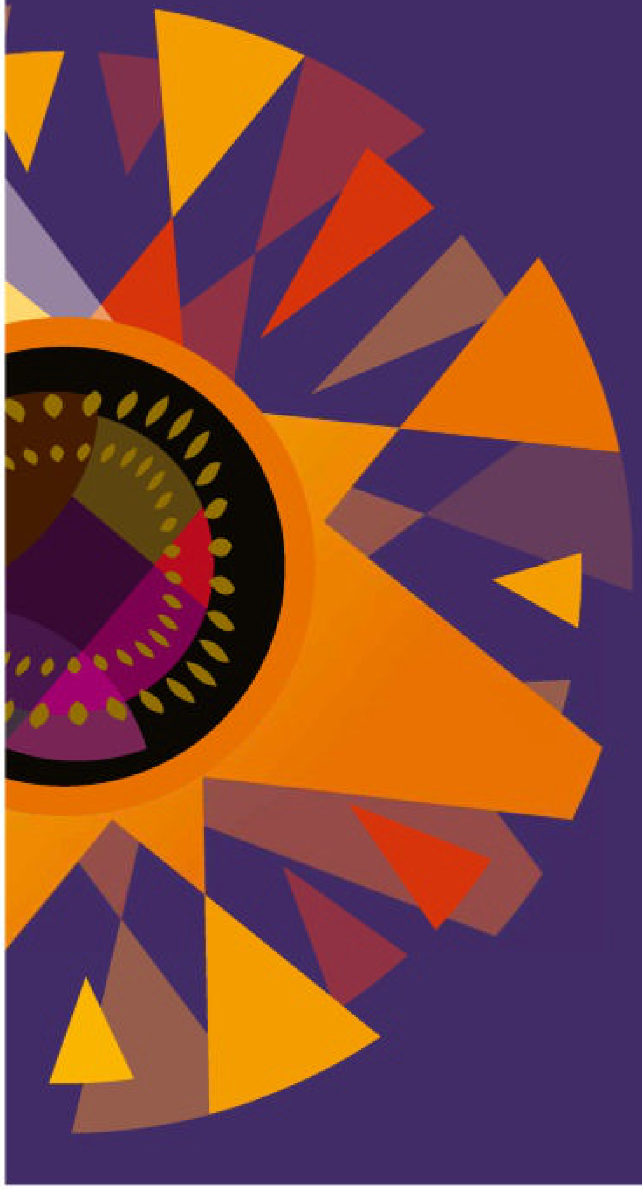
Cuyahoga Falls, OH, 2 July – 4 September
Tel. +1 216 231 1111
Web: www.clevelandorchestra.com

Since 1968, the Cleveland Orchestra has spent summers in the bucolic Cuyahoga National Park, opening the Blossom Pavilion with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The Ninth returns, conducted by Jahja Ling, as the Festival nears its midpoint. Copland's Symphony No. 3 and John Adams's *Harmonielehre* share the season with the Paul Simon Songbook and a salute to 'Broadway Legends', while visiting pianists namecheck Daniil Trifonov, Cédric Tiberghien and Benjamin Grosvenor.

Grand Teton Music Festival

Jackson Hole, WY, 3 July – 27 August
Tel. +1 307 733 3050
Web: www.gtmf.org

'Opera is one of my greatest passions' declares artistic director Donald Runnicles. No surprise there. Since 2007 he's been Generalmusikdirektor of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Puccini's *La bohème* inaugurates an ongoing opera initiative – a new venture for the Festival Orchestra which announces itself



COLORADO MUSIC FESTIVAL

June 30–August 7 | coloradomusicfestival.org

6 weeks and 22 concerts including:

John Adams, Composer-in-Residence
Celebrate John Adams' groundbreaking music and the music of many others he has influenced.

Three Must-Hear Premieres
New music by composers Timo Andres, Wang Jie, and jazz great Wynton Marsalis.

Unforgettable Guest Musicians
Including clarinetist Anthony McGill; pianists Jan Lisiecki, and Gabriela Montero; violinists Tessa Lark and Randall Goosby.

North America

Festival fiddlers: Benjamin Beilman appears at Cabrillo; (below) Leila Josefowicz is at Sun Valley

CHRIS LEE

with Beethoven's five piano concertos performed by Garrick Ohlsson over two nights. Mahler's 'Resurrection' Symphony and the US premiere of Detlev Glanert's *Idyllium* complement chamber music from the St Lawrence Quartet and a new piano recital series.

Glimmerglass Festival

Cooperstown, NY, 8 Jul – 21 August
Tel. +1 607 547 2255
Web: www.glimmerglass.org
Glimmerglass took to its lawns to maintain an al fresco season last summer, but this year the Alice Busch Opera Theater opens its lakeside doors once more. Artistic director Francesca Zambella stands down when the final curtain falls, but she takes her leave with a new production of *The Sound of Music*; and, proving there's life in the old *pasticcio* genre yet, she co-directs the premiere of *Tenor Overboard*, a frothy confection stuffed with some of Rossini's best tunes. Briana Hunter stars in a new staging of *Carmen*.

Music@Menlo

Menlo, CA, 14 July – 6 August
Tel. +1 650 330 2030
Web: www.musicatmenlo.org
Founded by cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han, Menlo has taken its mission to explain exuberantly to heart for 20 summers now, and the anniversary edition trains its forensic expertise on Haydn. Wrapped around a core concert programme that makes 'Hunt' Quartet conspirators of Haydn and Widmann, and tackles humour in Ives, Schnittke and Shostakovich, the festival's signature Overture Concerts, Encounter Lectures, Carte Blanche recitals and morning sessions establish an illuminating backstory.

Ottawa Chamberfest

Ottawa, Canada, 21 July – 4 August
Tel. +1 613 234 6306
Web: www.chamberfest.com
It started as a modest event slaking a classical music thirst during the drought days of summer – and how it's grown! Chamberfest's outreach Buzz strand includes 'Chamber Pint', one initiative among many in a year-round programme. But the summer festival remains central with some 120 concerts across churches, museums, galleries and heritage sites. It even has its own Fringe – check the website for details.

Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music

Santa Cruz, CA, 24 July – 7 August
Tel. +1 831 426 6966
Web: www.cabrillomusic.org
After nearly a quarter of a century at the helm as artistic director, Marin Alsop passed the baton to Christian Măcelaru in 2016, and Cabrillo remains a byword for its vibrant championship of the new (John Adams and Copland are past occupants of the hot seat). 2022's premieres includes works by Jake Heggie, Stacy Garrop and Ivan Enrique Rodriguez; guests include mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, violinist Benjamin Beilman and vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth.

Festival D'Opéra de Québec

Québec, Canada, 24 July – 4 August
Tel. +1 418 529 4142
Web: www.festivaloperaquebec.com
The city's opera festival launched in 2011 with an expanded take on Stravinsky's *The Nightingale*, and it continues to do things a little differently – this year a chariot of singers criss-crosses the city revisiting moments in the company's history. Gounod's *Faust* crowns a literary thrust to the programme, which fashions a children's operetta from three Andersen fairy tales and premieres Eric Champagne's music theatre piece on the life of writer Marguerite Yourcenar.

Sun Valley Music Festival

Sun Valley, ID, 24 July – 18 August
Tel. +1 208 622 5607
Web: www.svmusicfestival.org
How better to end a festival inhabiting Idaho's answer to the Alps than Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*? And having assembled the requisite horn players, why wouldn't you round up 16 of them for a chamber concert 'Hornucopia'! Leila Josefowicz plays Stravinsky's Violin Concerto; Daniil Trifonov, the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2; and, paired with Ravel's complete *Mother Goose* ballet, Nicholas Phan sings Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*.

View our Health & Safety Policies

For tickets and more information visit santafeopera.org or call +1-505-986-5900

Opening Nights Sponsor
+1-855-674-5401
fourseasons.com/santafe

FOUR SEASONS RESORT RANCHO ENCANTADO, SANTA FE

Introducing ... Breaking
BARRIERS
An annual series celebrating the diverse artists and leaders in the vanguard vof classical music today and for future generations, curated by
Chief Conductor
Marin Alsop
The inaugural three-day festival of concerts, film, social sessions, and symposia spotlights women on the podium, recognizing the 20th anniversary of the landmark Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship program and the 100th birthday of Margaret Hillis, the pioneering founder of the Chicago Symphony Chorus.
RAVINIA
Ravinia.org
"My philosophy is: It was tough for me so that I could make it easier for you."
—Marin Alsop
Scan
to see full series and event package details
breakingbarriers.ravinia.org
2022 Lead Series Sponsor:
Dinah Jacobs Castle

music in the vineyards

Napa Valley Chamber Music Festival

August 3-21, 2022

Winery Venues | World-Class Musicians

Witty Commentary | Stunning Views & Wine Tasting

Join us for the 28th season of Music in the Vineyards, the acclaimed chamber music festival held each August in the Napa Valley. The festival showcases 30+ world-class artists-in-residence from the U.S., Europe and Canada performing new and classic chamber music repertoire in stunning winery settings.

musicinthevineyards.org

BUDLEIGH MUSIC FESTIVAL

8-16 JULY 2022

FEATURING WORLD RENOWNED ARTISTS AND EMERGING YOUNG TALENT

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO:
www.budleighmusicfestival.co.uk

Sun Valley Music Festival

The joy of making music

2022 SUMMER SEASON
July 24-August 18

This summer, experience world-class performances in a gorgeous, outdoor alpine setting in Idaho's Rocky Mountains. Music Director Alasdair Neale, the all-star Festival orchestra, and renowned guest artists from across the globe—including pianists Daniil Trifonov and George Li and violinist Leila Josefowicz—will present over three weeks of epic works from Beethoven to Strauss, alongside contemporary masterpieces from acclaimed newcomers. There is something for every listener, *and it's free!*

This year's fundraising Gala Concert presents one of the most instantly recognizable 20th-century works: *Carmina Burana.* Backed by two choruses, the Festival Orchestra and three superb soloists will deliver this foot-stomping, spine-tingling music in all its glory. Sales help keep the rest of the summer performances admission free.

See you at the concerts!

svmusicfestival.org

Rest of the World

Cross-cultural encounters: the Australian Festival of Chamber Music features Natsuko Yoshimoto and William Barton

Abu Dhabi Festival

United Arab Emirates, year-long

Web: www.abudhabifestival.ae

After last year's bold declaration that 'The Future Starts Here', the Festival is in pursuit of 'Creation, Innovation and Joy' as it unpacks 'Crafting the Emirates' State of Mind'. It's nothing if not outward-looking. 'Discover Arab Music Days' in Berlin vie with Verdi from Spain's Teatro Real and a collaboration with the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Whakatipu Music Festival

Queenstown, New Zealand, 15-18 April

Tel: +64 (0)21 434432

Web: michaelhillviolincompetition.co.nz

Fringed by mountains and washed by the sparkling waters of lake Whakatipu, the festival nurtures emerging talent alongside seasoned professionals and grassroots initiatives. The result is both hands-on and eclectic. Amid the chamber music, a Taonga pūora seminar spotlights traditional Māori instruments, while featured artists include soprano Madeleine Pierard, pianist Stephen De Pledge and composer Lucy Mulgan (whose festival commission receives its first performance).

Canberra International Music Festival

Canberra, ACT, Australia, 29 April – 8 May

Tel: +61 (0)2 6230 5880

Web: www.cimf.org.au

Anyone for an 'Ears Up' concert specially conceived for dogs and owners blessed with hypersensitive hearing? It's one of artistic director Roland Peelman's more left-field fancies in a festival journeying from 'Pole to Pole'. Navigating trails through the natural world, Peelman puns deftly on his chosen theme, showcasing Polish musicians as well as Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles* painting. Across 41 events, early music from Spain rubs shoulders with new Australian works; and Haydn looms large – from *The Creation* to the 'Sun' quartets by way of breakfast summons.

4MBS Festival of Classics

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 8-29 May

Tel: +61 (0)7 3847 1717

Web: www.4mbs.com.au

Come October, 4MBS's festival focus will be turning to Shakespeare and *Romeo and Juliet*, but first up is May's musical extravaganza – a south-east Queensland fixture and Australia's most extensive celebration of classical music. For 2022, celebrating its 150th anniversary, the Queensland Choir squares up alongside Ensemble Q and the Gold Coast Piano Quartet to a theme that cunningly pre-empts October's brush with the Bard: 'The Great Romantics'.

Coriole Music Festival

McLaren Vale, South Australia, 21-22 May

Tel: +61 (0)8 8236 7499

Web: www.coriolemusicfestival.com

South of Adelaide in the McLaren Vale wine region is a winery that for over 20 years has been perfecting the art of blending good food and music. 'The Sense of an Ending' hangs over this year's offering, which explores late works by Liszt, Shostakovich, Lili Boulanger and Richard Strauss among others. The Seraphim Trio gives the Australian premiere of Brett Dean's *Imaginary Ballet* and there's the world premiere of Andrew Ford's *The Blessing*.

Stellenbosch Chamber Music Festival

Stellenbosch, South Africa, 1-10 July

Tel: +27 72 531 3235

Web: www.sicmf.co.za

2022 marks a return to live music making at the Stellenbosch Konservatorium,

ANDREW RANKIN, MARCO BORGGREVE

Eastern pleasures: violinist Kyung-Wha Chung at PyeongChang; (below) Lahav Shani conducts at the Pacific Music Festival

where for 16 years until the pandemic intervened some 300 young musicians from South Africa and further afield convened under the nurturing gaze of an international faculty drawing on musicians from the US, Europe and South Africa. Public masterclasses as well as chamber and orchestral concerts are on offer. South African-born, New York-based Kathleen Tagg is composer-in-residence.

Music in PyeongChang

Gangwon, South Korea, 2-23 July

Web: www.mpyc.kr/en

Violinist Kyung-Wha Chung and cellist Myung-Wha Chung are among past directors of a festival which celebrates its 20th anniversary next year. Spread across Gangwon Province, its main home is the Alpensia Concert Hall and Music Tent; and as well as some 30 masterclasses, over 20 concerts run the gamut from solo recitals and song to orchestral music from the PyeongChang Festival Orchestra. Pianist Yeol Eum Son is the current artistic director, which might account for this summer's particularly fine keyboard line-up including Simon Trpčeski and Alexander Melnikov.

Pacific Music Festival

Sapporo, Japan, 16 July – 2 August

Web: www.pmf.or.jp/en

Each summer, young musicians from around the world come together at the festival founded by Leonard Bernstein in 1990. And while a faculty including players from the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonics put them through their paces, outreach work is just as important. Principal conductor this year is the music director of the Israel Philharmonic Lahav Shani, and he's assisted by the Milwaukee Symphony's Ken-David Masur. Works include Brahms's Symphony No. 2 and Mendelssohn's 'Reformation' Symphony.

Australian Festival of Chamber Music

Townsville, Queensland, Australia, 29 July – 7 August

Tel: +61 (0)7 47714144

Web: www.afcm.com.au

Australia's pre-eminent chamber music festival has long been fortunate in its artistic directors, and the latest of them, violinist Jack Liebeck, hits the ground running after business-as-usual resumes following a two-year abeyance. The festival musters at least one postponed act of salvage: the premiere of variations on Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' theme by 25 Australian composers to mark the quarter-century of the Goldner Quartet. Threaded throughout are works by Paul Dean, including a new Concerto for Chamber Orchestra. Science is 'illuminated'; a new festival garden envelops an outdoor stage; and in a trail of 'guilty pleasures', accordionist James Crabb salutes Bon Jovi.

Rest of the World

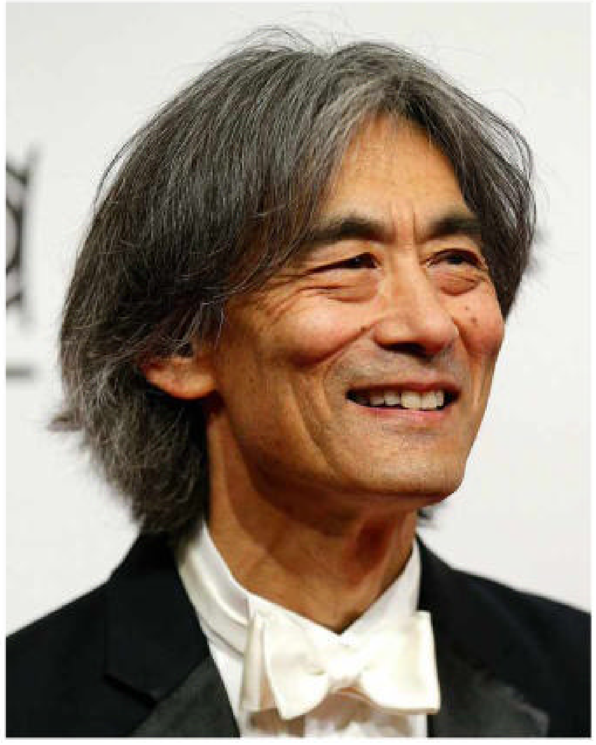
Taipei Music Academy and Festival

Taipei, Taiwan, 31 July – 14 August

Tel: +886 2 2511-5383

Web: www.taipeimaf.com

Taipei has always taken the lofty view – its Festival HQ clings to a mountainside, after all. So, having played to full houses in 2020, after Covid struck it relocated to San Francisco last year. Now it's home again and with a faculty that includes conductor Kent Nagano, the New York Philharmonic String Quartet and violinist-director Cho-Liang Lin. Conducted by Nagano, the concluding orchestral tour pairs Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Mahler's Symphony No. 4.



Taipei beat: Kent Nagano conducts Mahler

GETTY

Brisbane Festival

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 2-24 September

Tel: +61 (0)7 38335400

Web: www.brisbanefestival.com.au

It's promising 'wonder, delight and celebration', but Brisbane 2022 has big boots to fill. Last year's jamboree notched up 128 sold-out performances and reached some one-and-a-half-million people. Camerata – Queensland's own chamber orchestra – teams up with singer-songwriter Lior for *Compassion*, his 2013 collaboration with composer Nigel Westlake. There's a tri-lingual reworking of Shakespeare's *Othello*; Israeli conductor Asher Fisch continues his Brahms symphony cycle with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra; and Poulenc's opera for solo soprano, *La voix humaine*, partners an intriguing new operatic update with a twist.

Tyalgum Music Festival

Tyalgum, New South Wales, Australia, 16-18 September

Web: www.tyalgumfestival.com.au

Tyalgum's 30th-anniversary programme last year was unavoidably cancelled, but if at first you don't succeed... let it live to fight another day (especially given such a strong one!). Between opening Debussy and closing Franck, there's a showing of the 1908 film scored by Saint-Saëns, *L'assassinat du Duc de Guise*, and horn-playing director Peter Luff takes part in the work that first brought him to the festival – the Schubert Octet. It's performed alongside Nielsen and a new work by Catherine Likhuta.

SWALEDALE FESTIVAL
50TH ANNIVERSARY 1972 – 2022

Alexander Markov
Evelyn Glennie
Peter Donohoe
Noriko Ogawa
Hallé Cellos
Rachel Podger
VOCES8
Brodsky Quartet
Sacconi Quartet
Jeneba Kanneh-Mason
Rowan Pierce
Ben Goldscheider
Magnard Ensemble
Paco Peña
Acoustic Triangle
Kathryn Tickell
Antonio Forcione
and much more...

MUSIC, ARTS & WALKING IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES
28 MAY - 11 JUNE 2022

FULL PROGRAMME AND TICKETS: www.swalefest.org

@swalefest @SwaleFest @swaledalefestival

LOTTERY FUNDED
Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

"NEW MUSIC MECCA"
—The New York Times
CABRILLO FESTIVAL
OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC
Music Director + Conductor Cristian Măcelaru
Music of our time, for our time.
JULY 24–AUG 7, 2022
Santa Cruz, California
featuring:
CABRILLO FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA
CRISTIAN MĂCELARU, conductor
LARA DOWNES, piano
KATHERINE NEEDLEMAN, oboe
BENJAMIN BEILMAN, violin
SASHA COOKE, mezzo-soprano
ROOMFUL OF TEETH, vocal band
2 weeks of concerts, talks and events, 12 orchestral works, 10 premieres, with 9 composers in residence!
plan your Festival experience now:
CABRILLOMUSIC.ORG
FRANK
GARROP
HARBISON
HEGGIE
MONTGOMERY
ORDWAY
PRESTINI
PUTS
REINKEMEYER
RODRÍGUEZ
ROUSE
SNIDER

Berliner Festspiele
#MusikfestBerlin
MUSIKFEST BERLIN
In cooperation with
Berliner Philharmoniker
Season Opening with top international orchestras and ensembles from the USA, the Netherlands, Great Britain, South Korea, Belgium, Italy and Germany
27.8.–19.9.2022
berlinerfestspiele.de
Programme & Tickets from April 28th
berlinerfestspiele.de

St Davids Cathedral Festival
Gŵyl Eglwys Gadeiriol Tyddewi
27TH MAY – 5TH JUNE
Florilegium
Alis Huws gives harp recital
Daniel Moult gives organ recital
Premiere of New Folk Songs by Grahame Davies and Paul Mealor performed by Ar Log
Jess Gillam and Ensemble
VOCES8 and Rachel Podger
Connaught Brass
BBC NOW with Ryan Bancroft
St Davids Cathedral Choir and British Sinfonietta
With Family Events and Workshops, a Talks series 'A life in Music' and celebrations for St Davids Cathedral Festival Royal Patron Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
For full programme please visit
stdavidscathedralfestival.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL & SUMMER SCHOOL
PIANO WEEK

SUMMER SCHOOL IS OPEN

Tudor Hall School | 10 - 17 July
Rugby School | 17 - 24 July
Dulwich College | 25 - 30 July

pianoweek.com

IN COLLABORATION WITH
STEINWAY & SONS
G. Henle Verlag
Finest Urtext Editions
SCHOTT
Pianist

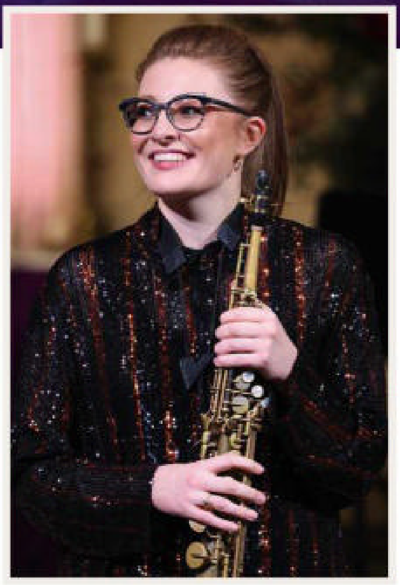
Coventry England

As it marks the 60th anniversary of a famous premiere, the UK's City of Culture aims to have plenty to sing about, reports *Claire Jackson*

A place of regeneration: Epstein's *St Michael's Victory over the Devil* greets visitors to Coventry Cathedral; (right) the premiere of Nitin Sawhney's *Ghosts in the Ruins*; (right, below) Jess Gillam, a recent visitor

The faint strain of a violin lesson can be heard from further down the hallway. In a large drawing room, a board meeting is taking place; upstairs, plans for city-wide schools project Cultural Cantata are in progress. Drapers' Hall in Coventry is alive once more – this time with tunes rather than textiles. After decades of lying empty, the former clubhouse of the Drapers' Guild has recently been converted into a charming recital venue run by Historic Coventry Trust. The regency building is also home to Coventry Music, which organises education programmes across the area. Nestled in the heart of the 'Cathedral Quarter', next door to the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Drapers' Hall has just hosted its first concert series – neatly timed to coincide with Coventry's status as UK City of Culture.

The skylights (rather than windows, installed to preserve Guild members' privacy) add to the building's interest, but Drapers' Hall is remarkable for more than its quirkiness. It is one of the few sites in Coventry not to be decimated during the Second World War. The hall's neighbour was not so lucky – the preserved spire, charred cross and crumbling walls are a monument to the bombed medieval cathedral, replaced by Basil Spence's modernist building in 1962. As part of the city's regeneration, the ruins are used as an events space. Those expecting a moment of solace by the stone altar might be surprised



Local hero

Philip Larkin

Philip Larkin (above) was born in Coventry in 1922 and lived in the city until he was 18, co-editing his school magazine, *The Coventrian*. There are multiple dedications to the poet, including a pub (the sports bar type, bizarrely) and a plaque at the station referencing 'I Remember, I Remember'. As a teenager, Larkin developed a keen interest in jazz and was later a critic for *The Telegraph*. His words have inspired composers including William Beckmann, who set *The North Ship* for voice and saxophone, and David Holloway, who used poems including *The Whitsun Weddings* as a basis for an electro-instrumental album.

to find a cinema screening, ice-rink or McFly concert. Given that neither Drapers' Hall nor the ruins were originally intended for music, careful planning is required to ensure that disturbance remains at a minimum. 'It can be a little bit like Edinburgh [Festival] Fringe,' agrees general manager Hannah Pierce. 'We're in close communication and we plan around those rare large events.'

Although Drapers' Hall doesn't have the acoustic design of a new venue, music has always been part of the ballroom. The small balcony where chamber groups used to play for dances has been left intact, waiting to be used by an enterprising ensemble. The main hall seats around 150 people – though finding those people is a different matter. 'Coventry does often get missed from tour networks,' explains Pierce. 'We want to change that. We're working closely with Coventry Music so that, for example, Jess Gillam led a workshop before she performed here. It was amazing for the children who had been involved in that lesson to then see her on stage.'

Coventry has had its fair share of boom and bust. The Specials' hit *Ghost Town* charted the economic decline of their hometown during the 1970s and early '80s. As part of the City of Culture regeneration, empty high street shops have been used to display visual work by local artists. The prestigious Turner Prize exhibition was held at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, where visitors can see the Broadwood piano once owned by Coventry resident Mary Ann Evans – better known under her pen name, George Eliot. The offices once owned by the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* have been converted into a stylish mid-century hotel and bar, with a cocktail dedicated to the local legend of Lady Godiva. The typewriters might have gone, but there are plenty of references to the building's original function, including period(ish) furniture and archival publishing curiosities.

The preserved spire and charred cross are a monument to the medieval cathedral

These include the newspaper's special supplement produced to mark the consecration of the new cathedral in 1962. As is the case with today's City of Culture initiative, there was a lively arts programme celebrating reconciliation and rebirth and, famously, the commemorative festival included a new commission – Britten's *War Requiem*, whose premiere on 30 May featured the English tenor Peter Pears and German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (the intended Soviet soprano soloist, Galina Vishnevskaya, was not given permission to travel). In recognition of the cathedral's 60th anniversary, Nitin Sawhney composed his *War Requiem*-inspired *Ghosts in the Ruins*, a promenade piece which, at its premiere earlier this year, moved audiences between the new building and the adjacent ruins.

'We've worked hard to show that art is for everyone,' says Chenine Bhathena, creative director for Coventry's UK City of Culture 2021 programme. 'There are now around 3,500 volunteer ambassadors for the city to guide residents and visitors. Over 2,000 people attended a streaming of Last Night of the Proms in 2021, with the Coventry audience broadcast back into the Royal Albert Hall. There has been investment in venues, studios, partnerships, education – music is a priority in Coventry.'

Further info: Coventry UK City of Culture: coventry2021.co.uk

GETTY

Composer of the Week is broadcast on Radio 3 at 12pm, Monday to Friday. Programmes in May are:
2-27 May Vaughan Williams*
(*month-long focus; see p140)

Iannis Xenakis

The Greek composer's multi-faceted approach and unique ingenuity helped shape music of often crushing intensity, says *Steph Power*

ILLUSTRATION: MATT HERRING

GETTY

Xenakis's style

Stochastic processes Inspired by his architectural work, Xenakis's breakthrough came in utilising probability calculations to create works such as *Metastasis* (1953-4). His exploration of these 'stochastic' processes reached apotheosis 40 years later with the digital computer programme General Dynamic Stochastic Synthesis (GENDYN).

Clouds, arborescences and sieves Concepts like 'melody', 'harmony' and 'rhythm' held little meaning for a music where forms were derived from the manipulation of sound masses or 'clouds', 'arborescences' of branching lines, or the points on a line he dubbed 'sieves'.

Polytopes Xenakis created a new genre of audiovisual installations combining music and architecture, sound and light. Site-specific works like the *Polytope de Cluny* (1972-4) attracted huge crowds.

Utopianism He envisaged a Cosmic City of three-mile-high skyscrapers where people would have free access to art-science and 'not fear the devastation of war since disarmament will have been accomplished on earth … with other expansions sought in cosmic space'.

'You are almost 30, you have the good fortune of being Greek, of being an architect and having studied special mathematics. Take advantage of these things. Do them in your music.' Iannis Xenakis came from a very different world to the one he was beginning to call home in 1951, when Messiaen offered him this advice.

It was not only his origins and early life experiences that set him apart. As Messiaen recognised, Xenakis 'was not someone like the others'; besides even his 'superior intelligence … this was a man so much out of the ordinary'. He would become one of the most significant and brilliantly unique composers of the 20th century, not just bringing art and science together but explosively reinventing them through the 150-plus viscerally intense compositions and prolific writings produced before the long illness which lead to his death 50 years later, in 2001.

Born to wealthy Greek parents in the Romanian port of Brăila on 29 May 1922, the meaning of Xenakis's surname seems to have presaged his future. This 'little stranger' was drawn young to astronomy, literature, archaeology and ancient Greek philosophy - while the sensitivity to music he shared with his mother was intensified by her death in childbirth when he was just five. Sent to Greece for education at a British school, in 1940 he began civil engineering studies at Athens Polytechnic, just as the foreign invasions began. Joining the communist resistance, Xenakis battled Italian fascists and German Nazis, then British anti-Marxists.

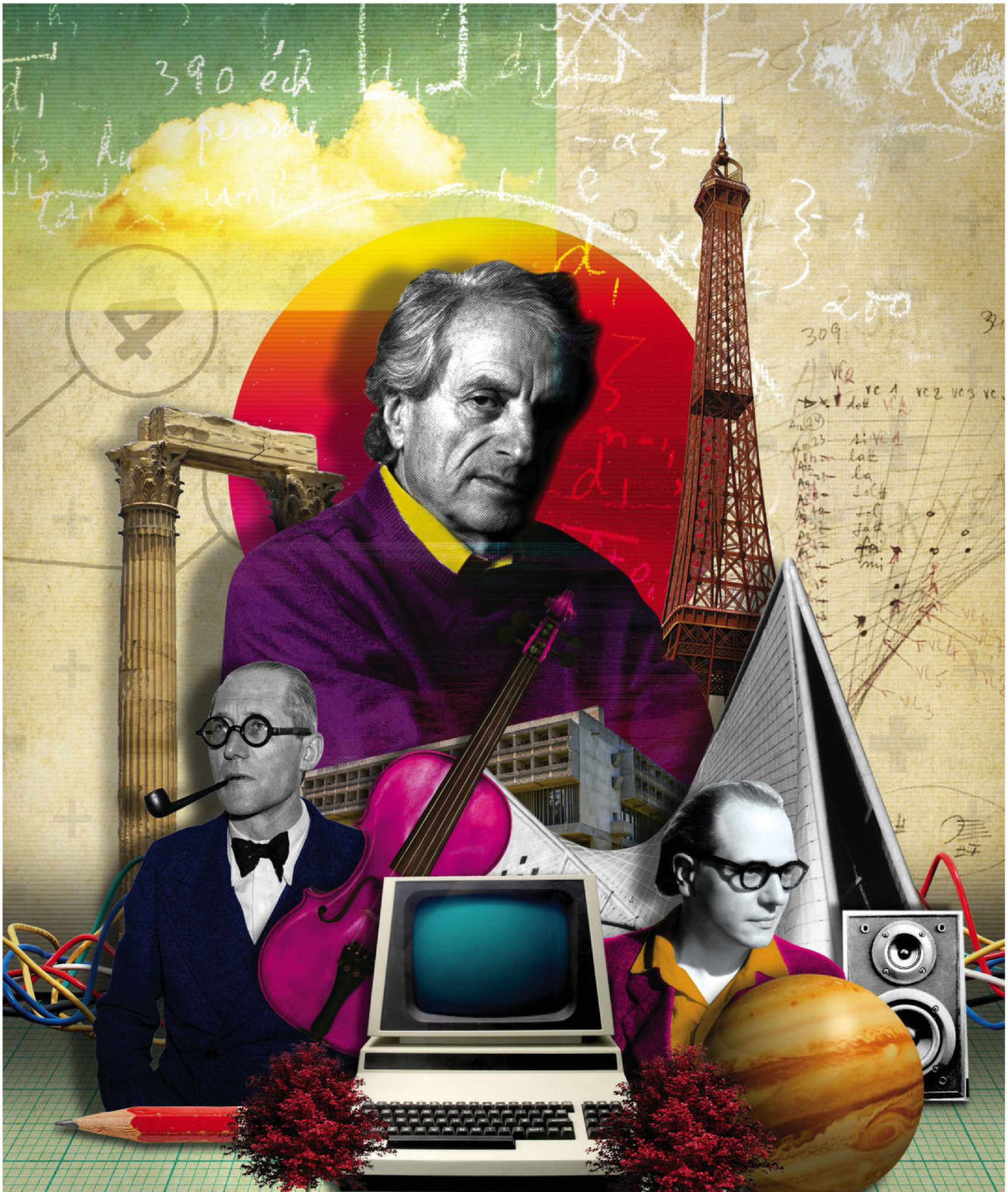
Somehow he graduated, studying music in his own time despite bouts in prison and a near-fatal encounter with shrapnel in 1944 which blinded him in one eye. Later, the composer Roger Reynolds would describe how his 'hawk-like, cratered face greeted one with a crooked smile', the result of extensive injuries.

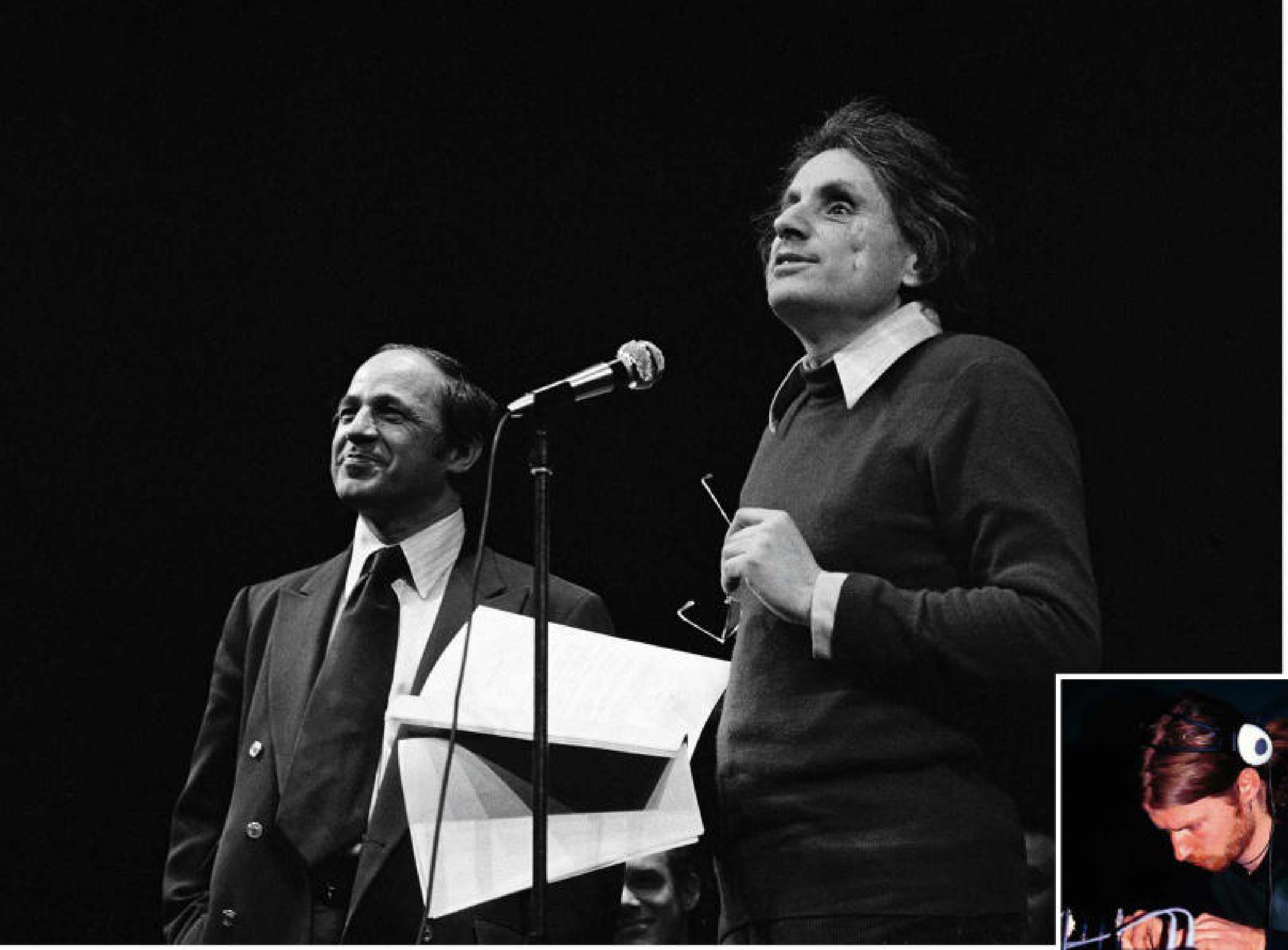
But worse was to come in the form of exile. In 1947, Xenakis learned that communists were being hunted by the military. Fleeing to Paris on a forged passport, he arrived a penniless refugee under sentence of death. He would not step foot in Greece again until his pardon following the junta's demise in 1974. By this time, he had been long-married (since 1953) to the writer Françoise Gargouïl, becoming a French citizen in 1965.

> **However ferocious his music might sound, Xenakis was driven by scientific processes**

It is hardly surprising that the brutality of his early life should have played a part in shaping his music. But however ferocious it might sound, the fledgling composer was driven by rational scientific processes rather than expressivity for its own sake. In his book *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Music* (1971), he would describe how the patterns of violently dispersed political rallies follow the same statistical laws 'as those of the cicadas or the rain … from complete order to total disorder in a continuous or explosive manner. They are stochastic laws.'

His first piece to explore these stochastic laws was *Metastasis* ('beyond





GETTY

immobility' 1953-4) for orchestra, and its premiere at Donaueschingen in 1955 caused uproar. It was composed while Xenakis was working at the studio of Le Corbusier. A superb engineer, he had landed a job with the architect soon after arriving in Paris and, while he left in 1959 following disagreements, his work would forever fuse architecture and music in ways direct and indirect.

Metastasis initiated as 'sonic spaces of continuous evolution' the glissandos and dense 'sound masses' or 'clouds' for which he would become famous. He noted how, in Western music, form is traditionally created from the development of small cells or themes based on scales – or, by the 1950s, serial patterns, as Stockhausen, Boulez and others were exploring. Critiquing this – and upsetting those peers with his 1955 article 'The Crisis of Serial Music' – Xenakis adopted a radically opposing, non-linear approach to form. Drawing on graph paper, he used mathematics to plot the breaking down of large masses into vast numbers of smaller sonic events. Notes were assigned randomly (he would go on to explore such phenomena as Brownian Motion, observed in gas molecules), creating a soundscape of hair-raising intensity and calling into question the entire basis of Western musical aesthetics.

These ideas originated in his architectural work and, soon afterwards, they were given literal architectural life when an overstretched Le Corbusier tasked him with designing the Philips Pavilion for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. 'I was interested in ... whether it is possible to get from one point to another without breaking the continuity,' he explained. 'In *Metastasis* this problem led to glissandi, while in the pavilion it resulted in the hyperbolic parabola shapes.'

The pavilion was a spectacular triumph – for which Le Corbusier initially took the credit. Thousands visited, experiencing within its extraordinary surrounds the *Poème électronique* commissioned especially from Varèse at Xenakis's urging, and the Greek's own, jewel-like miniature, *Concret PH*, a tape piece created from the sounds of burning charcoal.

Notes were assigned randomly, creating a soundscape of hair-raising intensity

Xenakis's vision was startlingly futuristic, his work later memorably described by the writer Ben Watson as 'an alien shard, glimmering in the heart of the West'. Throughout his career, detractors would accuse him of reducing music to cold mathematics, while Boulez's dismissal was terse: 'Fantastic brain – absolutely no ear'. Yet successive pieces would belie such claims in their kinetic exuberance of colour, texture and form – which Xenakis would often amend according to his musical intuition, however rigorous the processes deployed.

With the initial support of Messiaen, the conductor Hermann Scherchen and composer-acoustician Pierre Schaeffer's Groupe de Recherches de Musique Concrète, Xenakis went on to explore across a host of genres the spatial properties of sound and its relationship to time. He worked with game, probability, set and group theories, geometry, algebra, algorithms and more in unprecedented ways – and pre-dating the popularisation of chaos theory in the 1980s.

Xenakis's legacy is one of music history's most radical and profound: from chamber and orchestral works like *Nomos alpha* and *Tetras*, *Jonchaies* and *Dämmerschein* to the electroacoustic *Bohor*, *La légende d'Eer* and *Gendy3*; from the opera or 'total theatre' *Oresteïa* via the choral *Nuits* to the ballet *Kraanerg*; from pioneering works for percussion including *Pléïades* to vast 'polytopes' like *Persepolis*, a site-specific sound-architecture installation involving hundreds of participants. Each piece was for him a form of research into questions of metaphysics, couched in terms of acoustic transformation. Once describing the process of composition as like navigating a 'cosmic vessel sailing in the space of sound, across sonic constellations and galaxies', he pushed performers to extremes. The soloist in the piano concerto *Synaphaï*, for instance, reads from a ten-stave tablature – one stave per finger – while a pattern in

Masters of modernism: (far left) Xenakis with Pierre Boulez, Paris, 1974; (left) his wife, the author Françoise Gargouïl; (below left) the DJ and composer Aphex Twin was influenced by Xenakis

the solo piano *Evryali* contains the C sharp a semitone above the highest keyboard note. Both pieces place large-scale form above gestural details, exploring the phenomenon of 'arborescences', whereby germinal shapes proliferate into a multitude of branching lines like the roots and branches of a tree.

Yet his music also reflects his many interests beyond science. Building on his early love for his own culture, he explored Greek and Romanian folk music and Byzantine chant, Javanese and other non-Western musics. Far from rejecting the past, he sought to advance the values and building blocks he felt had been neglected to the detriment of civilisation, recognising even in the spiderwebs he scrutinised during family summers spent on Corsica the Ancient Greek knowledge that numbers underpin all life.

His music was too individual to produce a 'school' of similar composers. But his influence remains profound, felt by peers Éliane Radigue and the younger Tristan Murail, plus students such as Pascal Dusapin, Horațiu Rădulescu and many others he taught at Darmstadt, Tanglewood, Indiana University (1967-72) and Gresham College, London, where he gave free lectures (1975-8).

Younger generations continue to be inspired by his work. In 1966, Xenakis was awarded French government funding to establish the arts-science research institute CEMAMu (Centre d'Études de Mathématique et Automatique Musicales). Through it, in 1977 he realised his long-held dream to develop a computer music system which enabled sounds to be created by means of hand-drawing onto a specially developed electro-magnetic board.

Dubbed UPIC (Unité Polygogique Informatique de CEMAMu), its first fruits were heard in *Mycènes Alpha* (1978), and it has since been used by composers from across the spectrum, including figures like Aphex Twin, and enabled access to computer composition for generations of children. In all of Xenakis's revolutionary achievements – transforming the worlds of music and architecture with the same humanitarian passion that saw him risk his life to stand against barbarism during WWII – it is this particular legacy that feels perhaps most poignant.

XENAKIS Life & Times

1922

LIFE: Iannis Xenakis is born on 29 May into a wealthy Greek family in Brăila, Romania. His father runs an import and export business; his mother, a pianist, encourages his early love of music.

TIMES: Following catastrophic defeat in the Greco-Turkish War, Greece cedes land in Thrace and Western Anatolia. ***Constantine I*** abdicates the throne and goes into exile.

1944

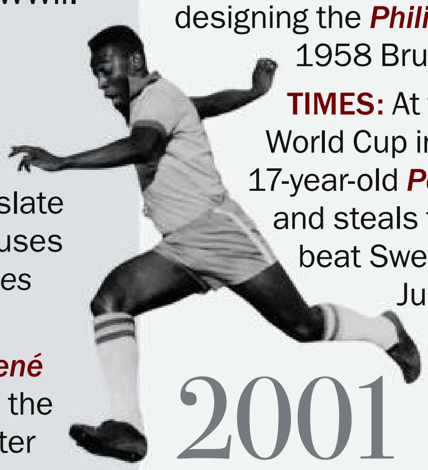
LIFE: As a member of the Greek People's Liberation Army, he is injured during street fighting in Athens. His shrapnel wound blinds his left eye for the rest of his life.

TIMES: Codenamed 'Operation Overlord', the Allies' Invasion of Normandy liberates France from the Germans within three months and weakens the Nazis' position in WWII.

1958

LIFE: Employed as an engineer at Le Corbusier's studio in Paris, to where he fled from Greece in 1947, he works on a number of important projects, including designing the ***Philips Pavilion*** at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair.

TIMES: At the final of the FIFA World Cup in Stockholm, the 17-year-old ***Pelé*** scores two goals and steals the show as Brazil beat Sweden 5-2 to lift the Jules Rimet Trophy.



1977

LIFE: He develops UPIC, a computer system that can translate graphic images into music. He uses the system to create his *Mycènes Alpha* plus two further pieces.

TIMES: *René Goscinny*, the comic writer who, with illustrator Albert Uderzo, created the *Astérix* books, dies of a heart attack in Paris. Uderzo continues the series on his own.

1983

LIFE: Having worked since 1973 as a visiting professor at Paris's Sorbonne, where he will remain in post until 1989, he is elected as one of the 40 members of the Académie Française.

TIMES: Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie, the 'Butcher of Lyon', is arrested in Bolivia and extradited to France where he will stand trial and be sentenced to life imprisonment.

2001

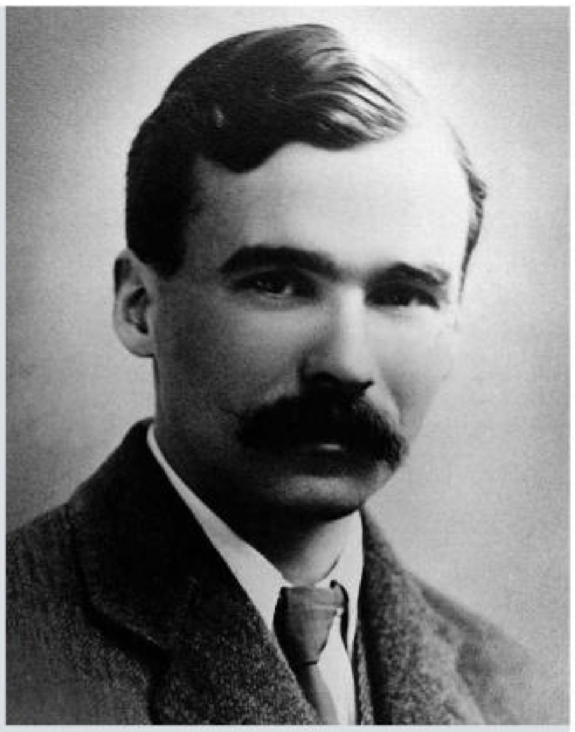
LIFE: Following a lengthy illness that means his 1997 *O-mega* for percussion soloist and chamber orchestra will be his last work, he dies aged 78 on 4 February at his ***home in Paris***.

TIMES: Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger launch Wikipedia, intending their online encyclopaedia to be made available for everyone on a not-for-profit basis.

George Butterworth

Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad

Clare Stevens picks the best recordings of this masterpiece inspired by AE Housman's lyrical poems of love and loss in rural England



The composer

When George Butterworth died in action at the Somme on 5 August 1916, his brigadier wrote of 'a brilliant musician in times of peace, and an equally brilliant soldier in times of stress'. Born in London in 1885, the Oxford-educated Butterworth became a close friend of Vaughan Williams, joining him on several field trips to collect folk songs – VW also credited Butterworth with encouraging him to write his *A London Symphony*. Though Butterworth's own output was small, his mastery can be seen in his songs and short but potently atmospheric orchestral works.

Building a Library is broadcast on Radio 3 at 9.30am each Saturday as part of *Record Review*. A highlights podcast is available on BBC Sounds.

The work

Hindsight can sometimes play tricks with our perception of a piece of music. A case in point is George Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad* – this song cycle for baritone and piano has become so closely associated with the First World War in which Butterworth lost his life that it is easy to forget that both AE Housman's words and the composer's musical setting actually date from several years earlier.

The small first edition of Alfred Edward Housman's 63 poems collected under the now-famous title *A Shropshire Lad* was published with very little fanfare in 1896, with some financial assistance from the author, a professor of Latin at University College, London. One of the critics who reviewed the book, Grant Richards, admired it so much that he bought the rights and reissued it under his own imprint. Keen for the poems to reach a wide audience, Housman welcomed the publication of cheap editions, including tiny volumes that fitted neatly into the breast pockets of soldiers serving on the western front. Its lyrical descriptions of the English countryside and weather, the references to many real places and the mood of nostalgia made *A Shropshire Lad* the perfect companion for young men seeking an escape in their off-duty hours from the horror of the trenches.

Housman was not himself a Shropshire lad; he was born in a Worcestershire village and grew up in the town of Bromsgrove, now part of the Birmingham conurbation, where his father was a solicitor. The 'blue remembered hills' that he described formed the distant western horizon of his youth, and the poems were written in Highgate, North London. Curiously, he refused to allow individual poems to be anthologised in collections of verse, yet was quite happy to authorise them to be set to music, as long as no cuts or alterations were made and, he said, as long as he did not have to listen to performances, which he found an embarrassing experience. He forbade concert promoters from reproducing the texts in programme books, and was pained by the discovery that some composers had disregarded his wishes about tinkering with the poems.

> Butterworth's knowledge of the English folk song tradition ideally suited Housman's poems

He would have had quite a task keeping abreast with all of them – Peter Parker, researching his 2016 book *Housman Country*, found that 47 composers produced 176 individual vocal settings between 1904 and 1940. Somervell, Vaughan Williams and Gurney are among those whose Housman settings have endured (see 'Continue the journey...', p107) but even in this distinguished company Butterworth's stand out.

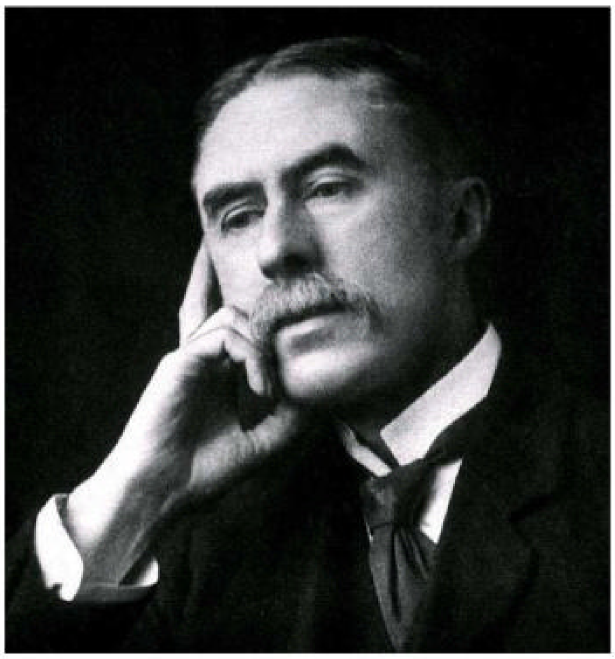
Their appeal lies partly in their economical simplicity and directness, and Butterworth's love for and knowledge of

A 'land of lost content': Long Mynd in Shropshire; (below) the poet AE Housman

the English folk song tradition can clearly be heard in his musical style. Such an idiom was ideally suited to the themes of Housman's poems, which represented an idealised 'land of lost content', an imaginary rural escape from the tensions of his own emotionally repressed life, albeit shot through with irony and loss.

The Six Songs under consideration here were composed from 1909-11, in tandem with a second five-song *Shropshire Lad* cycle, published as *Bredon Hill and other songs* in 1912. Nine of the songs were given their first performance in Oxford in May 1911 by the baritone James Campbell McInnes, accompanied by the composer. A month later, on 20 June 1911 at the Aeolian Hall in London with Hamilton Harty as the pianist, McInnes performed the six songs that were included in the first published selection.

They follow a loose narrative sequence, opening with 'Loveliest of trees', a simple reflection on the transient beauty of a cherry tree whose drifting blossoms are echoed by a wistful falling motif, though



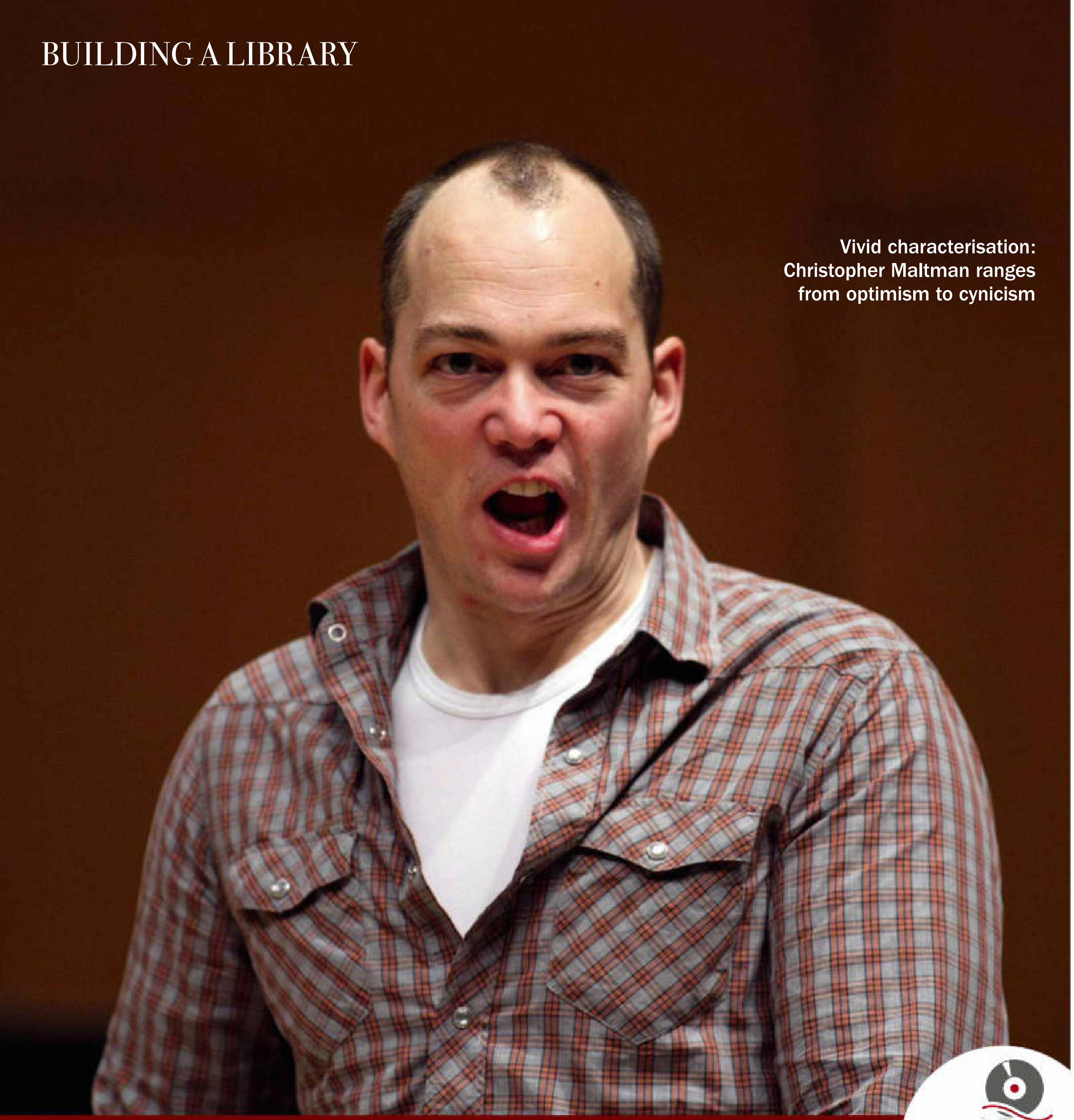
the conclusion is optimistic as the poet/singer resolves to seize the day and enjoy the bloom while he can. The second song, 'When I was one-and-twenty', is the only one to use an existing folk tune; the prevailing mood is carefree as a lovelorn young man shrugs off the sage advice of an older friend, with a painful realisation of his folly in the final bars.

The Greek myth of Narcissus is used as a metaphor for the theme of lost love in the beautifully crafted third song, 'Look not in my eyes', while, with its urgent piano part, 'Think no more, lad' adds immediacy and a more universal context to the threat of loss, as the narrator contemplates the heedlessness with which young men put themselves in harm's way.

'The lads in their hundreds' depicts the jolly crowd who gather at Ludlow Fair – some attracted by the company of girls, some by the pubs – and anticipates their fate as they head off to a war from which many will not return. It was encored by an enthusiastic audience at the premiere, but the final song, 'Is my team ploughing?', a poignant dialogue between the ghost of a fallen soldier and his surviving friend, in which each has his own melody, is the acknowledged masterpiece of the set.

Turn the page to discover our recommended recordings of Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad

GETTY, ALAMY



Vivid characterisation: Christopher Maltman ranges from optimism to cynicism

A subtle yet eloquent performance

The best recording

Christopher Maltman *(baritone)*

Roger Vignoles (piano)
Hyperion CDA 67378

So many outstanding singers and pianists have recorded this work that choosing between them seems invidious – strong contenders among baritone singers include two versions by Roderick Williams, with pianists Iain Burnside and Susie Allan, plus performances by Simon Keenlyside, Thomas Allen and Bryn Terfel, all with Malcolm Martineau. Add to the mix, too, a couple of versions with orchestral accompaniment (not Butterworth's own, importantly) from James Rutherford with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by Kriss Rusman, and Stephen Varcoe with the City of London Sinfonia conducted by Richard Hickox.

However, it is the recording made in 2002 by baritone Christopher Maltman with pianist Roger Vignoles that sits at the top of my 20-strong pile, on the grounds of Maltman's warm yet never overbearing vocal quality and his subtle characterisation of the texts, which seems to achieve a perfect balance between objectivity and emotion.

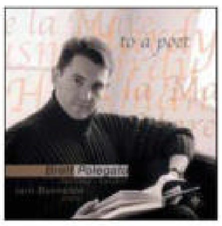
Christopher Maltman finds a perfect balance between objectivity and emotion

'Loveliest of trees' comes across as a young man's performance: thoughtful, yet optimistic and romantic. The same mood infuses an immaculate performance of 'When I was one-and-twenty', while 'Look not in my eyes' is beautifully paced, eloquent and reflective. In 'Think no more, lad', the narrator sounds as though he has had a pint or two and a more cynical tone comes in, but it is not overdone and Maltman never loses fidelity to the score.

In the first half of 'The lads in their hundreds' the mood is slightly detached; the narrator seems to be an observer rather than a participant in the drama; but the tone becomes more and more poignant as the second half of the song progresses towards a gentle, wistful conclusion. The final point that 'The lads that will die in their glory and never be old' is not

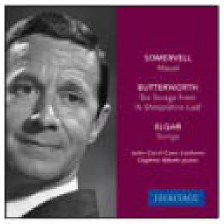
Three other great recordings

Ian Bostridge (tenor)
Released to mark the centenary of the 1918 Armistice, this recording places the Butterworth set in the context of an imaginative programme of related repertoire, including six delicate songs by the German composer Rudi Stephan, another WWI casualty, and Kurt Weill's *Come up from the fields, father*. In fine voice, Bostridge easily delivers the rich heartiness often required, but the haunting fragility that characterises his upper register is a real asset too, especially in the final song. Antonio Pappano is a commanding presence at the piano. *(Warner Classics 9029566156)*



Brett Polegato (baritone)
In this 1999 account, Brett Polegato's Canadian accent occasionally comes through, but given the contribution of Canadian forces to the Allied cause in WWI this seems appropriate. There's a youthful tone in the first song and a lyrical warmth to 'Look not in my eyes', with a sceptical twist at the end. The final trio are unsentimentally delivered; the ghost seems not frail, but far away, which makes a refreshing change. Iain Burnside, artistic director of the annual Ludlow English Song Weekend

which takes place in the very church in which Housman is buried, is a discreet but deft accompanist. *(CBC Musica Viva MVCD 1134)*



John Carol Case (baritone)
There are many similarities between this 1974 recording and a slightly earlier one by baritone John Shirley-Quirk and pianist Martin Isepp. Both feature superb playing and eloquent, lyrical singing throughout, with particularly strong differentiation between the two characters in 'Is my team ploughing?'. For me, Carol Case just has the edge, bringing the listener right into the room with the two men. Recorded towards the end of his career with Daphne Ibbott an able accompanist, his performances convey a poignant sense of an older man's reflection upon painful memories. *(Heritage HTGCD 297)*

And one to avoid...

Shura Gehrman, whose 1981 recording with pianist Adrian Farmer can be found on the Nimbus label that he himself founded, had a fabulous, rich voice that must have sounded wonderful in some repertoire. However, while his resonant bass adds extra layers of drama to these songs, sadly he does not deliver the precision they need, in either pitch or diction.

laboured; there is no stress on the word 'glory'; in this intimate performance there doesn't need to be.

Maltman is not unique in creating an illusion that there really are two people in conversation in 'Is my team ploughing?', but he is particularly persuasive in this respect. The ghostly voice of the dead soldier is faint and quavering, though with a touching emphasis on the second phrase of 'Is my girl happy, that I thought hard to leave?'. Maltman doesn't milk the final 'Never ask me whose', but his pianist Vignoles points to the conclusion with his doom-laden low last note.

GETTY, SIMON FOWLER, IVOR GURNEY TRUST

Housman proud: Mark Stone sings CW Orr's settings; (below) Ivor Gurney

Continue the journey...

Five works to try after Butterworth's Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad

After completing his two sets of songs setting Housman's poems, **George Butterworth** also composed a related 'orchestral rhapsody' that he eventually called *A Shropshire Lad* (he jettisoned two earlier titles, *The Land of Lost Content* and *The Cherry Tree*). A work of extraordinary poignance, it opens with a mournful stillness before a clarinet solo plays a melody, recognisable from his 'Loveliest of trees', that provides the main theme. (**Hallé Orchestra/Mark Elder** *Hallé CDHLL7503*).

Housman's poems proved a draw to a fair number of British composers in the early 20th century, not least **Arthur Somervell**, who set ten of them in his *A Shropshire Lad* from 1904. Beginning with 'Loveliest of trees' and rounded off by 'The lads in their hundreds', Somervell's cycle leads us on a journey in which a young man initially basks in the joys of spring before, song by song, introducing us to life's darker elements, including the painful repercussions of romance and, as war looms, the call to arms. (**Roderick Williams (baritone), Susie Allan (piano)** *Somm SOMMCD0615*).-

No composer showed a greater devotion to the work of Housman than **CW Orr**, who made regular visits to Shropshire for the purposes of research. The Cheltenham-born composer wrote various Housman settings, including the seven-song cycle *A Shropshire Lad*, which he worked on from 1927-31. (**Mark Stone (baritone), Simon Lepper (piano)** *Stone Records ST8012*).

> CW Orr made regular visits to Shropshire for the purposes of research

Another Gloucestershire composer to show his admiration for Housman's depictions of Shropshire was **Ivor Gurney**, who wrote his gently lyrical cycle *Ludlow and Teme* shortly after returning from action in the First World War. Here, added instrumental colour is provided by a string quartet. (**James Gilchrist (tenor), Anna Tilbrook (piano), Fitzwilliam String Quartet** *Linn CKD296*).

And no Housman-inspired collection should be without **Vaughan Williams**'s 1909 *On Wenlock Edge*, also for tenor, piano and string quartet (the composer also later made an arrangement for orchestra). From the fraught, crackling opening of 'On Wenlock Edge' itself to near-motionless in 'Bredon Hill', this is a cycle of dramatic contrasts. (**Adrian Thompson (tenor), Iain Burnside (piano), The Delmé Quartet** *Hyperion CDH55187*).

Reviews

Recordings and Books rated by expert critics

Welcome

This issue is out just in time for Easter and so there's more than the usual share of sacred works in our Choral & Song section, with two Stabat Maters, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and whole discs of Easter works from the Cambridge colleges of St John's and King's, among others. Whether you're a church-goer or not, there's no denying the power and beauty of this music.

Beyond that we've a dollop of Vaughan Williams, plus dazzling debuts from Samoan tenor Pene Pati (see our Opera Choice) and young Finnish conductor Klaus Mäkelä, who has struck gold with his Sibelius cycle (our Recording of the Month). There are plenty of wise elders, too, including a brand new recording from the 97-year-old American pianist Ruth Slenczynska.

Michael Beek *Reviews editor*

This month's critics

John Allison, Nicholas Anderson, Michael Beek, Terry Blain, Kate Bolton-Porciatti, Geoff Brown, Michael Church, Oliver Condy, Christopher Cook, Martin Cotton, Christopher Dingle, Misha Donat, Jessica Duchen, Rebecca Franks, George Hall, Malcolm Hayes, Julian Haylock, Claire Jackson, Daniel Jaffé, Stephen Johnson, Erik Levi, Andrew McGregor, David Nice, Roger Nichols, Bayan Northcott, Steph Power, Anthony Pryer, Paul Riley, Jan Smaczny, Michael Tanner, Roger Thomas, Kate Wakeling

KEY TO STAR RATINGS

★★★★★	Outstanding
★★★★	Excellent
★★★	Good
★★	Disappointing
★	Poor

RECORDING OF THE MONTH

Mäkelä's Sibelius is an electrifying triumph

David Nice is blown away by the prowess and creativity on display in the young Finnish conductor's very first recording

Sibelius

Symphonies; Tapiola; 3 Late Fragments
Oslo Philharmonic/ Klaus Mäkelä
Decca 485 2256
264:33 mins (4 discs)

Most Finnish greats have recorded cycles of Sibelius symphonies at least once: Berglund, Salonen, Saraste, Segerstam, Vänskä, Oramo, Kamu, Storgårds. Who'd have predicted that this latest, from Klaus Mäkelä at the helm of the Oslo Philharmonic, one of the two orchestras who adore their principal conductor, would be the most electrifying and often revelatory of them all? Having encountered this phenomenon, just 26, live in concert in Oslo, I certainly thought it possible. But the results have exceeded all expectations.

In that often-paraphrased conversation about the nature of the symphony between Sibelius and Mahler, the Finn favoured compact logic in contrast to Mahler's 'the symphony must be like the world; it should contain everything'. This cycle as a whole reinforces Mahler's dictum, simply because Mäkelä avoids a uniform approach to the seven masterpieces.

The first two have space and grandeur when needed, and some surprisingly slow tempos held up by intensity, detail and a sense of the bigger picture, but also keen forward movement at vital points. I didn't think those violin tremolos near the start of the First could be more exciting than the ones Santtu-Matias Rouvali got from his Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra in his first Sibelius recording, but they are; the Oslo Philharmonic strings sound equal to Berlin (and I know from the concert performance of Bartók's

BBC music MAGAZINE CHOICE

Impressive debut: Klaus Mäkela's Sibelius exceeds all expectations

Miraculous Mandarin Suite that superb recorded balances aren't glamourising). Similarly I couldn't imagine any performance of the Second Symphony's extraordinary slow movement as stupendous as the live one I heard from Paavo Järvi and the Estonian Festival Orchestra, but Mäkelä and his Oslo players do it again.

Also at the very top of the tree is this Fifth Symphony (though how I wish the radically different earlier version had also been included). Mäkelä does like to treat what's usually a central intermezzo as another slow movement, and the same is true of the mystery at the heart of the Third Symphony – for me, Oramo found a unique key to the hypnotic circling – but the quality of the solos and the colourings always holds the attention. After spending a long time with the Fourth Symphony for BBC Radio 3's *Building a Library*, I'm convinced that its bleak ending has to proceed

> No. 7 sounds like the work of a conductor at peak maturity, and this *Tapiola* is peerless

without any slowing down; that Mäkelä does so might stop this being my top choice. Then again, the dark colours and the cello solo at the start as well as the nurturing of the *Largo* towards its shattering, short climax go beyond what any other recorded performance has achieved in this unique anatomy of a symphony. No. 6 is fascinating but may flow more miraculously in time; No. 7 sounds like the work of a conductor at peak maturity; and again this *Tapiola*, right from the opening urgency through the introspective mystery of the middle to the terrifying storm, is peerless. Thanks, too, for the three late fragments of what may have been intended for the Eighth Symphony Sibelius destroyed. I don't agree with Mäkelä's declaration in the booklet note that they 'suggest a completely new language' – the continuity persists – but his way with them makes one long for more. The rest of the tone-poems and *Kullervo* next, please.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

MATHIAS BENGUIGUI, MARCO BORGGREVE

An interview with Klaus Mäkelä

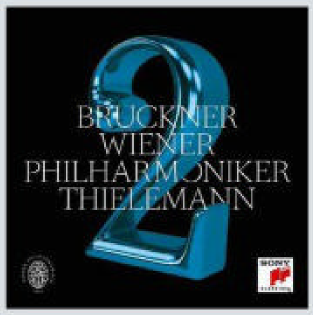
The Sibelius symphony cycle is a bit of a rite of passage for a Finnish conductor, isn't it?
Yes. It's music we feel very close to. They're all masterpieces, and in so many ways. I think Sibelius actually offers more opportunities than your average composer for different interpretations. Because there are so many themes you can decide to have more audible, and balances and textures that you can treat in so many different ways. I think it actually offers lots of variety for conductors.

Did your time as a cellist give you a different perspective?
I used to play the symphonies in the Helsinki Philharmonic – the orchestra where most of them were first performed – and many of the string players played with a certain bowing. It's important to pass on that tradition to the Norwegian musicians. So there is a little bit of that, but I think freedom is still most important in music. You should always have a good argument for anything you do, musically; it's a balance.

The pandemic offered an unusual situation for this recording, didn't it?
We were supposed to make this album in a series of concert recordings, but when the pandemic intensified we realised that we just had to start recording and abandoned the original idea. We completely immersed ourselves in the music of Sibelius during the spring of 2021. I must say the Fourth Symphony possibly benefitted the most from the situation. It's a deeply melancholic symphony which feels like a very personal statement, and in those conditions it somehow came together in a very special way.

Orchestral

ORCHESTRAL CHOICE



A winning, charming Bruckner Second

Stephen Johnson gets drawn into the Vienna Philharmonic's rich soundworld

Bruckner

Symphony No. 2 (ed. Carragan)
Vienna Philharmonic/
Christian Thielemann
Sony Classical 19439914122 58:10 mins

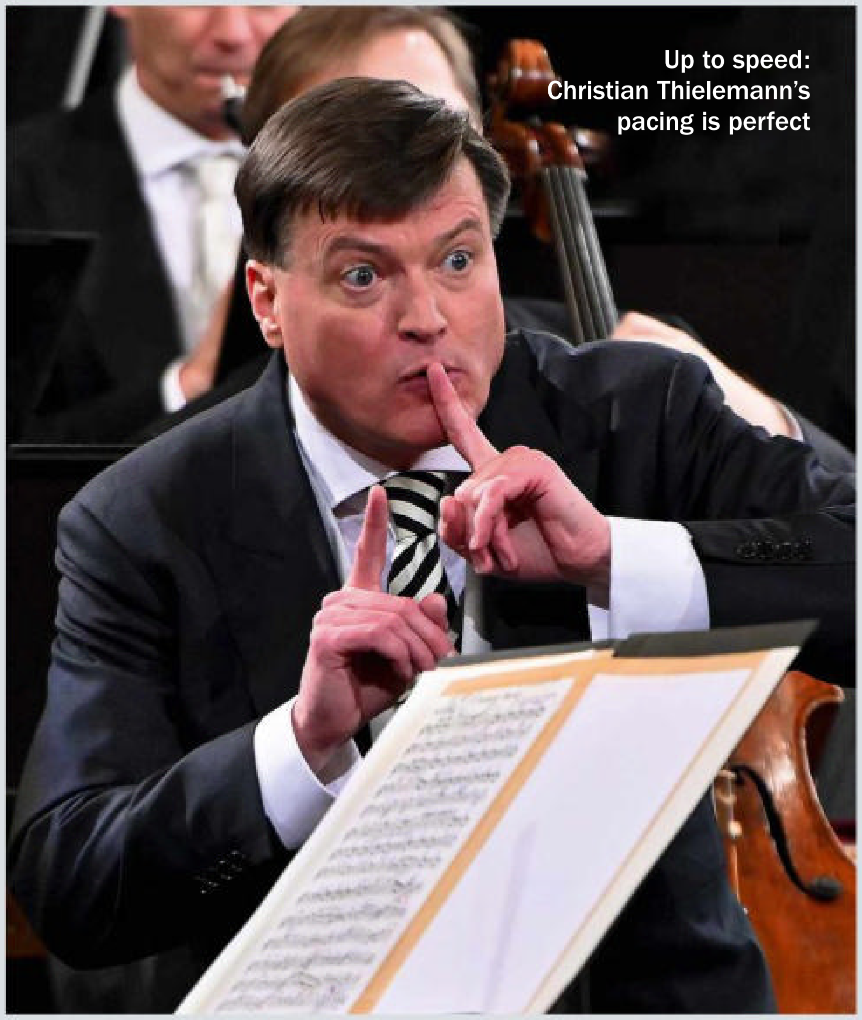
Well, this was a surprise. Previous encounters with Christian Thielemann in Beethoven and Schumann (admittedly a while ago) have struck me as heavy going. And the general tendency to treat Bruckner's symphonies as weighty 'cathedrals in sound' almost at the expense of any warm, supple human element has, I think, gone way too far in recent years. But right from the start this is beautifully paced, expansive but never dragging, and with a richly 'featured' sound. Instead of going for homogenised plushness, Thielemann brings out details subtly but tellingly: I'd forgotten how much lovely woodwind writing there is in this work. Also striking from the first cello phrases is how expressive it all is. This is emphatically not the kind of performance that concentrates exclusively on sound and structure. It's a palpably warm-blooded Bruckner: a great musical architect certainly, but also a man who loved Schubert's Lieder and used to quote them regularly to his friends, and who was a fine dancer until well into his sixties.

> Thielemann brings out details subtly but tellingly

I'm not sure that taking the *Adagio* at what feels like a half-speed version of the first movement's basic pulse is entirely convincing, or at least not at first; but it draws one in, the climax and final benediction movingly done. In the problematic 'pause' finale Thielemann judges everything so well that, as in the old Haitink recording, it's hard to see what the problem ever was.

The new Carragan version of the score sounds a lot like the Haas edition, but with a few small surprises. This symphony may still not emerge as perfectly achieved, but treated like this it carries its conviction right through to the end.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

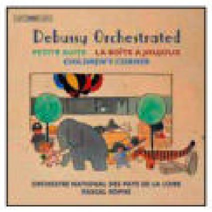


Up to speed: Christian Thielemann's pacing is perfect

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

Debussy

Petite Suite (orch. Büsser); La boîte à joujoux (orch. Caplet); Children's Corner (orch. Caplet)
Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire/Pascal Rophé
BIS BIS-2622 (CD/SACD) 65:07 mins



Some of Debussy's later output tends to be rather overshadowed by the much-celebrated masterworks of his earlier maturity (especially *Nocturnes* and *La mer*). *La boîte à joujoux* grew from an idea by book illustrator André Hellé for a 'ballet for children' – about a box of toys, whose occupants come to life to tell their story of the Soldier's ultimately successful rivalry with Polichinelle for the hand of the Doll. (One of Hellé's pictures is on the booklet cover.) Debussy wrote the piano score in 1913 but left most of the orchestration unfinished at his death; this was completed for the 1919 stage premiere by André Caplet, himself a gifted composer, whose earlier arrangement of *Children's Corner* Debussy had much liked. The result is a total delight – beautifully wrought and paced, and conveying that poignant child's-eye view of the world, relating to his adored daughter Chou-Chou, that was one of Debussy's special insights.

Both *La boîte à joujoux* and the similarly enchanting *Children's Corner* are performed with deft panache by this quality orchestra, whose subtly shaded tone and style sound much more like those of earlier French vintages than the globalised full-colour sonority dominating elsewhere today. There are outstanding individual players, among them the principal oboe, whose haunting contribution to 'The Little Shepherd' in *Children's Corner* is a special moment.

It's a small pity (only) that this high-class collective response to Pascal Rophé's conducting doesn't quite happen in the *Petite Suite*, whose naturalness and charm here sound strangely earthbound.
Malcolm Hayes

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Gail Kubik

Divertimentos Nos 1 & 2; Symphony Concertante; Gerald McBoing Boing
Terry Everson (trumpet), Jing Peng (viola), Vivian Choi (piano); Boston Modern Orchestra Project/Gil Rose
BMOP BMOP/sound 1085 (CD/SACD) 69:19 mins

This American composer once inspired an enthusiastic LP sleeve note written by the formidable teacher Nadia Boulanger in praise of the music's 'unfaltering energy', 'dreaming power', and 'fecundity of mind'. But that was almost 60 years ago, and the

GETTY, KATHY WITTMAN

hyperactive output of Gail Kubik (1914-84) has long since dropped off most people's radar. Its reappearance is delightful and delicious, especially when performed as by Gil Rose's Boston forces with so much wit, bright colouring and punch. Terry Everson's jazz-inflected trumpet solos, prancing through the late 1950s Divertimenti, are particularly invigorating: icing on the cake in music already irrepressibly lively, though the second Divertimento proves more thoughtful and relaxed.

Built from little building blocks, crisp in the neo-classical Stravinsky manner, Kubik's music found a natural home in film documentaries, a few features and cartoons, most typically in *Gerald McBoing Boing* (1950), adapted from Dr Seuss's story about a boy who 'speaks' noises rather than words. Frank Kelley's very lively narrator is an asset in the concert version we hear.

That leaves the Symphony Concertante, with its quirky solo line-up of trumpet, viola and piano – three instruments that should never mix. Bracing enough for the composer to win the 1952 Pulitzer Prize for music, the piece isn't as well-knit as its companions. But it still offers multiple chances to feast on Kubik's individual panache, the clear and vibrant recording, and a conductor and instrumentalists at the top of their game, clearly enjoying every note. *Geoff Brown*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Ravel

Le Tombeau de Couperin (complete, orch. Hesketh); La valse; Alborada del gracioso; Une barque sur l'océan; Menuet antique; Pavane pour une infante défunte

Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra/Sakari Oramo

BIS BIS-2438 (CD/SACD) 68:43 mins

Hard on the heels of John Wilson's fine Ravel orchestral music album for Chandos comes this equally impressive and brilliantly recorded programme from Sakari Oramo and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic. Both conductors offer viscerally exciting performances of *La valse*, but I find Oramo's interpretation probes deeper into the music's sinister subtext, driving home the final terrifying descent into chaos with greater ferocity. Honours are more evenly divided in the *Pavane*, the other piece common to both discs. Here Wilson draws some ravishingly beautiful sounds from his orchestral players in contrast to Oramo's more restrained textures.

His linear approach works particularly well in *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. Here, unusually, it's performed in the sequence of movements as originally conceived for Ravel's piano version, and features marvellously idiomatic

Punching the numbers: Gil Rose conducts colourful works by Gail Kubik

Dance Captain: Diaghilev (right) with Ukrainian ballet star Serge Lifar

From the archives

Andrew McGregor delves into Warner Classics's colourful celebration of Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*

Can you name five pieces written for the *Ballets Russes*? You'll probably start with Stravinsky's famous trio: *Firebird, Rite of Spring, Petrushka*. Debussy next, maybe: *L'aprés-midi d'un faune*, *Daphnis et Chloe*, *Jeux*. Just the tip of the musical iceberg, and this celebratory set dedicated to **Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes** (*Warner Classics 9029647715, 22 CDs*) to mark the impresario's 150th anniversary reveals the extraordinary 20-year history of this transformative force in early 20th-century European music and art.

The opening Paris season in 1909 showcased the first new commission: Tcherepnin's *Le Pavilion d'Armide* (a decent performance from the Moscow Symphony Orchestra and Henry Shek). In 1910 the major new work was Stravinsky's *Firebird*, offered here in the slightly low-octane reading from Ozawa in Boston. The Rattle/CBSO *Petrushka* is more potent, and so is Debussy's *Faune* from Rattle in Berlin. I'm delighted that the set taps into some classic French recordings: Jean Martinon conducting Florent Schmitt's *Salomé* and *La Péri* by Dukas; André Cluytens's stylish *Daphnis* and a sinister *Jeux*.

There's the sheer indulgence of André Previn's complete *Swan Lake*, classic Richard Strauss from Rudolf Kempe, the surreal slapstick of Satie's *Parade* from Michel Plasson in Toulouse and Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat* with Victoria de los Ángeles and Frühbeck de Burgos is a fine performance. So is Prokofiev's *Chout* from Abbado and the LSO, and three delightful rarities conducted by Igor Markevitch. Then there's Pierre Monteux's 1929 *Rite of Spring*, just 16 years after he'd conducted the scandalous Paris premiere; one of a number of historic recordings on the last disc.

On a tour of Spain, King Alfonso asked Diaghilev what he did for the *Ballets Russes*, as he didn't dance, conduct or play an instrument. 'Your majesty, I'm like you,' Diaghilev replied. 'I don't work. I do nothing. But I am indispensable.' And so's this set, as a potent reminder of the power and influence of the *Ballets Russes*.

BBC RADIO 3 90–93FM

Andrew McGregor is the presenter of Radio 3's *Record Review*, broadcast each Saturday morning from 9am until 11.45am

orchestrations of the 'Fugue' and 'Toccata' by Kenneth Hesketh. The Royal Stockholm Philharmonic negotiates the tricky rippling figurations of the 'Prélude' and the fleet-of-foot articulation of the 'Rigaudon' with remarkable clarity, but the 'Forlane' seems a little breathless and lacking in elegance.

Une barque sur l'océan is given a superbly controlled and atmospheric performance, vividly conveying the physical sensations of standing aboard a ship, breathing in the sea air and experiencing the unpredictable thrill of the crashing waves. There's lots of energy and excitement, too, in *Alborada del gracioso*, but Oramo doesn't quite capture the sultry warmth of its slower middle section. *Erik Levi*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Santoro

Symphony No. 5; Symphony No. 7, *Brasília*
Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra/Neil Thomson
Naxos 8.574402 70:58 mins

Mid-20th-century Brazil was a site of music-political foment for composers following in Villa-Lobos's wake. Like many, the young Claudio Santoro (1919-89) became embroiled in heated debates around nationalism and folk music, serialism and the avant-garde, and his style would change radically through his career. Producing 14 symphonies and much else, he would prove one of the country's leading musical figures.

The symphonies on this first volume of a projected cycle date from his nationalist turn in the 1950s. Yet their stylistic reach goes further than their broadly conventional post-Romantic idiom and four-movement structures might suggest. Both the Symphony No. 5 (1955) and Symphony No. 7, tellingly subtitled *Brasília* (1959, commemorating the country's new capital), show a preference for abstracted rather than overt use of folk material. While both feature scherzos involving Brazilian percussion, its deployment does not merely invoke local colour, but springs from rhythmic and thematic underpinnings that integrate the music.

Piquant modal inflections suffuse the Fifth, from its dark-hued, mysterious string opening to its vigorous yet firmly non-triumphalist finale. The journey is navigated with aplomb by the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Neil Thomson. Deftly woven counterpoint is contrasted with off-beat rhythms and expansive melodies that showcase each section of the orchestra to effect.

Initially similar, the Seventh veers into more challenging territory with Stravinsky-esque, angular rhythms and motifs. Not quite so cohesive, it's nonetheless a tantalising glimpse of Santoro's stylistic swerves to come. *Steph Power*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Schubert

Symphony in E, D729 (completed R Dünser); Fierrabras – Overture
Berne Symphony Orchestra/Mario Venzago
Prospero PROSP 0030 56:46 mins

If you thought there was only one unfinished symphony by Schubert, think again. There must be far more uncompleted works by him than by any other major composer. This one mainly shows Schubert at his least inspired, still attempting to write an Italian-opera style series of movements, and succeeding only in producing the skeletons without the flesh.

Mario Venzago, hero of lost musical causes, writes at length and obscurely about why he thinks the work worth extensive surgery and recording, but the 40 minutes that it takes – there is also an Overture, in a similar style – seem interminable. This is despite the polished orchestral playing and the spirited tempos. Indeed the tempos are too spirited, and by the time I'd reached the fourth movement I found it hard to remember what the first movement had been like.

Schubert is still remembered first as a great song composer, yet there is not a single memorable theme in the whole of this work. Surely it is permissible to say that the reason for many of Schubert's works being unfinished is that the composer recognised that what he had written was not worth expansion. *Michael Tanner*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

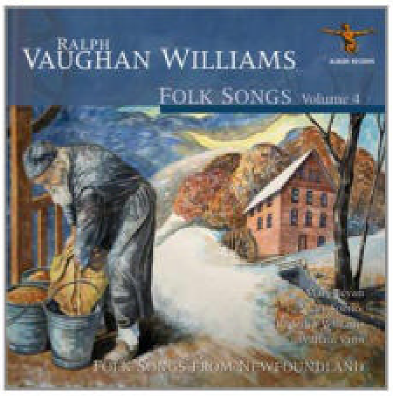
Albion Records

The recording arm of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society

Join the Society today and get the latest Journal and 2 free CDs: *Albion's Vision* and *Albion's Journey*!
UK membership £25,
Concessions £15
Higher rates overseas, to cover postage.

ALBION RECORDS

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS



ALBCD045

FOLK SONGS VOLUME 4
INCLUDING FOLK SONGS FROM NEWFOUNDLAND

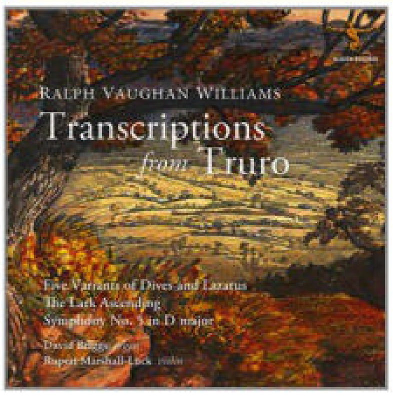
Mary Bevan, Nicky Spence, Roderick Williams and William Vann

This concludes our acclaimed series of the complete folk song arrangements.

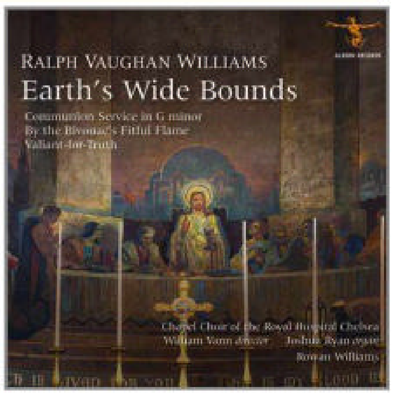
This entire series has been an unalloyed triumph, and a landmark in the RVW discography.
James Altena *Fanfare*

13 premiere recordings

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS



ALBCD049



ALBCD051

TRANSCRIPTIONS FROM TRURO
Symphony No. 5 in D major
Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus
The Lark Ascending
David Briggs (organ)
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)

EARTH'S WIDE BOUNDS
Communion Service in G minor
Nocturne: By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame
Valiant for Truth
Hymns and anthems
William Vann (conductor)
Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea
Rowan Williams (speaker)

Soundclips, videos and more information of all our CDs can be accessed by visiting:
rvwsociety.com/albionrecords/

RVW 150

www.rvwsociety.com
Now in our 28th year!

Distributors: Proper Music Group (UK) and Naxos (America).
Downloads up to 24-bit.

CONCERTO CHOICE

Nuance and spontaneity in this Bach and Vivaldi

Paul Riley enjoys Rinaldo Alessandrini's joined-up approach to *L'estro Armonico* and Bach's responses

A renewed perspective: Rinaldo Alessandrini always finds fresh details

JS Bach • Vivaldi

Vivaldi: L'estro Armonico, Op. 3; **JS Bach**: Six Concertos after L'estro Armonico by Antonio Vivaldi
Concerto Italiano/Rinaldo Alessandrini
Naive OP7367 201:04 mins (2 discs)

From Christopher Hogwood's groundbreaking set with the Academy of Ancient Music some 40 years ago to Rachel Podger's delectable 2015 Brecon Baroque release, Vivaldi's Op. 3 has been well served on disc. And there are plenty of fine recordings of Bach's keyboard reworkings of six of them (four for harpsichord, two for organ) as he gained hands-on experience of the new concerto style that was taking Europe by storm. Surprisingly, no one has thought to bring them all together – until now. Not so surprising, perhaps, is that Rinaldo Alessandrini is the man to have done it. Vivaldi and Bach, along with Monteverdi, are the cornerstones of his repertoire, and he unfailingly finds fresh things to say about all three.

Having previously tackled Vivaldi's operas, a vibrant sense of theatre clings to Alessandrini's every interpretative decision; and while he's typically all over the detail, he never loses sight of how movements relate to one another. He always looks behind the obvious to find a nuance that can lift a phrase, all the while encouraging a spontaneity that results in the most seductive heel-kicking ornamentation. A spry, oxygenated account of the Concerto for four Violins, RV 594 immediately sets out Alessandrini's stall, embedding the virtuosity within a shimmering, alert soundscape that turns the many corners with sensitivity, structural acuity and the palpable sense of intoxication that pervades both discs. He bags the last word, playing Bach's solo harpsichord version of RV 230 with a spaciousness and clarity that similarly informs Lorenzo Ghielmi's breezy navigation of RV 565's transcription for organ. Just a hair's breadth separates Podger and Alessandrini; but given the Bachian bonus, and Concerto Italiano's impish edge, *L'estro Armonico* has just found itself a new benchmark.

> A sense of theatre clings to Alessandrini's every interpretative decision

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No. 5, 'Emperor'; in E flat, WoO 4
Boris Giltburg (piano); Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Vasily Petrenko
Naxos 8.574153 62:40 mins

Playing a bright-toned Fazioli grand with steely authority and luminous tenderness, Boris Giltburg gives a fine account of the 'Emperor' Concerto which honours Beethoven's markings plus the many additional traditions of rubato and tempo modification accumulated in the work's performance history. Vasily Petrenko draws playing of comparable force and gentleness from the RLPO in a full-bodied Philharmonic Hall recording. In short, a reliable, inexpensive, straight-down-the-middle modern-instrument account without interpretative eccentricities.

Also included is one of Beethoven's very earliest efforts – a lengthy piano concerto, also in E flat, completed at 14 and eventually catalogued as WoO 4. The full score is lost, but Beethoven's manuscript of the solo part survives including reductions of the tutti passages. Editions have appeared with conjectural orchestrations, but Giltburg has preferred to play the piano score as Beethoven left it as a kind of concerto-sonata. It proves no masterpiece, combining much florid writing to show off piano technique with reluctance to stray far from the home key. Yet the 'kiddies-game' main theme of its finale sticks in the mind and later there is an attempt at gypsy (or maybe Beethoven thought of it as 'Turkish') style that points forward. *Bayan Northcott*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Grieg

Peer Gynt (arr. Tormod Tvete Vik)
Ragnhild Hemsing (violin, hardanger fiddle); Trondheim Soloists
Berlin Classics 0302646BC 48:15 mins

The Hemsing sisters from the folk-rich Valdres district of Norway have pursued interesting parallel careers. Eldbjörg has launched a bid for international

EMILIE MOYSSON

concert-circuit stardom, while Ragnhild fuses classical and folk tradition, or lets them co-exist alongside each other, by playing both the violin and the Hardanger fiddle. Though nothing is quite as Grieg conceived it, that interchange makes for marvellous programming of music connected with his score for Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* here.

There's a complexity and sometimes a traditional fiddlyness (pun not intended, but I'll go with it) to Norway's national instrument, the five understrings of its nine giving sympathetic resonance, that doesn't always suit Grieg's essential simplicity: not, perhaps, given the pure original flute of 'Morning', or the simple sustained strings of 'Ase's Death'. The preceding improvisations, though, are wondrous, and other numbers arranged by Tormod Tvete Vik for Hemsing and the excellent Trondheim strings hit a surprising bullseye. If you sometimes feel that the folk instrument approaches the grate of bagpipes, then the Solveig songs as spun so beautifully on contemporary violin will soothe you. And it's good to hear a perfect fit in the wedding dances; one was added as an arrangement of a Grieg piano piece, the other two appear unaccompanied in the original. *David Nice*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Jolivet • Shostakovich • Weinberg

Jolivet: Concertino for Trumpet, String Orchestra and Piano; **Rachmaninov:** Do Not Sing, My Beauty (arr. trumpet and piano); **Shostakovich:** Piano Concerto No. 1; **Weinberg:** Trumpet Concerto
Selina Ott (trumpet), Maria Radutu (piano); ORF Vienna RSO/Dirk Kaftan
Orfeo C220011 60:07 mins

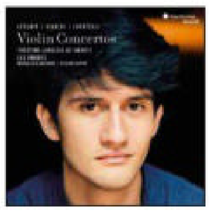
Although only in her early twenties, trumpeter Selina Ott has already released two highly praised recordings on Orfeo which focus on virtuoso Russian, Soviet and French repertoire. This third disc follows a similar path, but the musical qualities of the works on offer are far more substantial. The Weinberg Trumpet Concerto, premiered in 1968, is a real find, covering a surprisingly wide range of moods over its three movements, from playfulness and sardonicism in the opening 'Etudes', to a much more introverted, even threatening, atmosphere in the central 'Episodes'. This movement's dark character casts a shadow over the brilliant finale entitled 'Fanfares' which opens with a solo trumpet cadenza peppered with witty quotes from Mahler's Fifth Symphony, Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Golden Cockerel* and Stravinsky's *Petrushka* before wending its way into a nervy and emotionally equivocal conclusion. Ott negotiates all the considerable technical hurdles of the Weinberg with aplomb and receives committed support from the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra under Dirk Kaftan.

Romanian pianist Maria Radutu delivers the piano part of the Shostakovich with considerable brilliance in the outer movements, if not quite achieving the helter-skelter manic humour that's projected by Boris Giltburg and the RLPO under Vasily Petrenko on Naxos. The recording of the Shostakovich is rather closely miked, allowing us to hear all the intricate inner details of the composer's string writing, but sounding a little dry at times. Fortunately, this problem is far less noticeable in the Jolivet which receives a robust and highly charged performance. *Erik Levi*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Leclair • Locatelli • Vivaldi

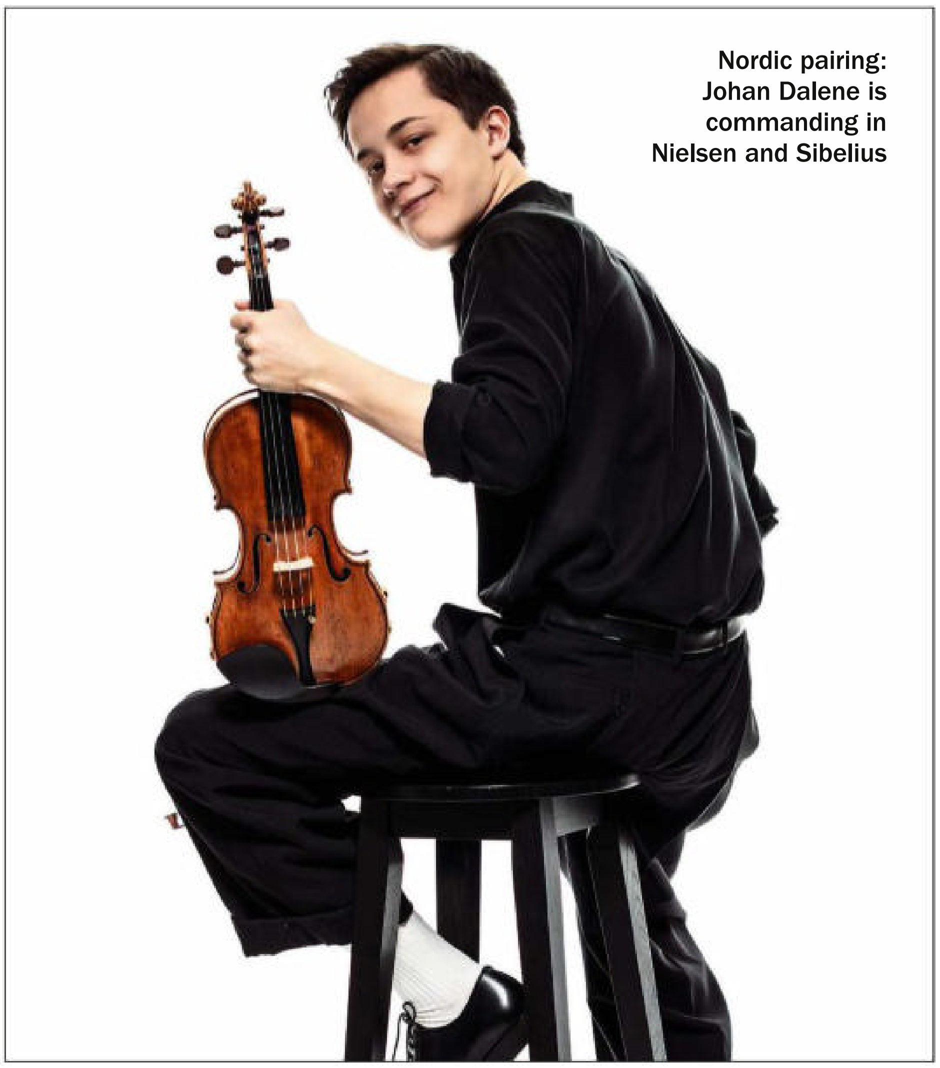
Leclair: Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 7/5; Violin Concerto in D, Op. 10/3; **Locatelli:** L'Arte del Violino Op. 3 – Concerto No. 8; **Vivaldi:** Violin Concerto in B minor, RV 384; Violin Concerto in C, RV179a 'Per Anna Maria' etc
Théotime Langlois de Swarte (violin); Les Ombres/Margaux Blanchard
Harmonia Mundi HMM902649 74:17 mins



This recording brings together concertos by three of the greatest violin virtuosos of the first half of the 18th century. Almost all of them are well represented on disc but the C major Concerto by Vivaldi is an interesting variant of another, in the same key 'per la Santissima Assontione di Maria Vergine', RV 581. It has survived in the partbook of Vivaldi's star pupil, Anna Maria, though of the concluding movement only the solo violin part has been preserved. This has been reconstructed by Olivier Fourés. All the music calls for a high level of technical expertise, the C major Vivaldi piece containing the composer's own cadenza, and the Locatelli concerto, in common with the others comprising his *L'Arte del Violino*, Op. 3, two extended solo capriccios.

Leclair and Locatelli first played together in 1728 when they were dubbed, respectively, an angel and a devil. If pyrotechnics are your thing then Locatelli is your man. If you rather prefer gentle inflections, dance inspired gestures, moments of alluring melody and, in short, a subtle blend of Italian and French manners, then Leclair will not disappoint. Théotime Langlois de Swarte athletically realises all these virtues, uniting complexities and poetry in Vivaldi's two concertos. Just occasionally, in the Leclair pieces, I would prefer a loosening of expressive intensity. Les Ombres, under its co-founder and bass violist Margaux Blanchard, provide a lively and sympathetic rapport with the soloist. *Nicholas Anderson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★



Nordic pairing: Johan Dalene is commanding in Nielsen and Sibelius

MATS BACKER

Mendelssohn

Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 2; Capriccio brillant
Paris Chamber Orchestra/ Lars Vogt (piano)
Ondine ODE 1400-2 51:34 mins

The two piano concertos of Mendelssohn's maturity are both cast in three interconnected movements, betraying the influence of Weber's famous *Konzertstück*. The G minor First Concerto has always been the more popular of the two, but its D minor successor, with its striking recitative-like beginning for the soloist and its deeply felt slow movement, is no less impressive. Both works are scored with Mendelssohn's customary fastidious care, and both were designed to display his own credentials as a virtuoso pianist.

Lars Vogt's dazzling playing on this new recording does them full justice. He takes the opening movement of the First Concerto at tremendous speed, reflecting Mendelssohn's *Molto allegro con fuoco* marking and making the sweeping scales sound like the rushing of the wind. At the same time, Vogt manages to inject a good deal of poetry into the calmer second

subject. His playing in the slow movement, too, is admirably limpid.

Vogt is a bit less convincing in the slow movement of Concerto No. 2. This is not an *Andante*, as in the First Concerto, but a genuine *Adagio*, and paradoxically Vogt's flowing tempo makes the music sound more sentimental than it does in the noticeably slower performance by Murray Perahia on his classic Sony recording. Still, this newcomer is very impressive and benefits greatly from the fine playing of the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris. The more concentrated *Capriccio brillant* in B minor makes an attractive companion-piece to the two concertos. *Misha Donat*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Nielsen • Sibelius

Violin Concertos
Johan Dalene (violin); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Stockholm/ John Storgårds
BIS BIS-2620 (CD/SACD) 73:23 mins

These two great Nordic violin concertos are coupled almost as frequently as Mendelssohn and Bruch these days. They certainly make a good foil for each other: the Sibelius darkly atmospheric, with discernible roots in private pain, the Nielsen playful, quirkily brilliant, but not without its own moments of deeper reflection.

The contrast works particularly well in this new studio pairing. Johan Dalene has a strong command of long evolving lines – crucial in both composers – but he balances that with a fine feeling for 'speaking' phrasing and articulation. The music seems to be addressing us personally, often on a very intimate level indeed. I haven't heard many performances that come so close in this respect to the classic Ginette Neveu recording (a firm personal favourite) in the slow movement of the Sibelius. The expression can certainly be full-toned and red-blooded, but what I like most of all are his *pianissimos*: how can tone that's so delicate, fragile almost, also be so full of feeling? Of course, Dalene is up against stiff competition in the Sibelius, but what I think gives his Nielsen the slight edge is the way he and John Storgårds bring out the element of conversation between soloist and orchestra. The enchanting dialogue that's such a key ingredient in Nielsen's later Wind Quintet is anticipated delightfully here. Yes, the Nielsen is a great concerto, but how many of the other 'great' violin concertos can be such fun, while at other times be so touching? Lovely recordings too. Strongly recommended. *Stephen Johnson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Weinberg

Cello Concertino; Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra; Chamber Symphony No. 4
Jean-Michel Charlier (clarinet), Pieter Wispelwey (cello); Les Métamorphoses/Raphaël Feye
Evil Penguin EPRC 0045 67:01 mins

The manuscript for Weinberg's Cello Concertino was discovered relatively recently, the composer not even listing it among his completed works. One reason for this might be that this work, which was written in a matter of days in 1948 during one of the darkest periods in the composer's life, is in essence a slimmed-down version of the later Cello Concerto featuring four movements that share almost identical thematic material. Yet the more intimate accompaniment of a string orchestra in the Concertino not only suits Weinberg's strong vein of melancholy, most obviously manifested in the unforgettably moving lament that opens and closes the work, but also works most effectively in the energetic Polish folk dance and klezmer-inflected material of the central movements.

Pieter Wispelwey inflects the solo cello part with tremendous artistry, sculpting Weinberg's melodic lines with a wonderful sense of colour and imagination yet without succumbing to indulgent emotion even in the most heart-rending passages. The Belgian ensemble Les Métamorphoses under Raphaël Feye are admirably responsive partners both in this work and in the *Fantasy*, another attractive work in which Wispelwey mesmerises the listener with his charismatic shaping of the hauntingly mysterious waltz in the slow sections and the rumbustious dance rhythms of the central *Allegro*.

Feye and Les Métamorphoses then take up the reins to deliver a compelling account of the emotionally inscrutable Fourth Chamber Symphony, impressively sustaining the tension throughout the quiet shadowy chorale textures and solo instrumental soliloquies that are so predominant in this late work. A word of praise too for the recording which captures these fine performances in stunningly vivid sound. *Erik Levi*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

A Night in London

Works by GB Cirri, Geminiani, Handel, JA Hasse, Oswald, Porpora, D Scarlatti
Sandrine Piau, Raquel Camarinha (soprano), Gabriel Pidoux (oboe), Ophélie Gaillard (cello); Pulcinella Orchestra
Aparté AP274 85:22 mins

Ophélie Gaillard's musical tour of Georgian London takes in a medley of vocal and instrumental works that might have wafted through the city's streets, theatres and salons in the early decades of the 18th century. This was the period when Londoners adopted 'the dear Saxon' George Frideric Handel and welcomed a flurry of Italian musicians who energised 'the land without music' with their instrumental virtuosity and the drama and lyricism of opera. The programme skilfully plaits together the various connections between two of the 'local boys', Charles Avison and James Oswald, and their émigré friends, colleagues and rivals.

Among the disc's many highlights are the virtuoso cello concertos by Cirri and Porpora which showcase Gaillard's athletic technique as well as her extraordinary ability to make the cello sing. Also invigorating is Geminiani's Concerto Grosso 'La Folia' (a homage to his teacher Corelli) whose vacillating moods and exotic Hispanic rhythms are thrillingly played up by the French-based period ensemble Pulcinella. Composer-cellist James Oswald was inspired by traditional Scottish tunes in four pieces that add a dram of local colour; their wistful melodies are expressively shaped by Gaillard or irresistibly jazzed up by the ensemble. Finally, we're treated to a quartet of vocal works, including Geminiani's arrangements of British folk songs and Handel's meltingly beautiful lament 'Credete al mio dolore' from *Alcina* – ravishingly sung by Sandrine Piau. *Kate Bolton-Porciatti*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Rhapsody

Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue etc; **Rachmaninov:** Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini; **Wild:** 7 Virtuoso Etudes after Gershwin
Martin James Bartlett (piano); London Philharmonic Orchestra/ Joshua Weilerstein
Warner Classics 9029643433 67:48 mins

In 2014 the then 17-year-old pianist Martin James Bartlett won *BBC Young Musician of the Year* with a thrilling account of Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. A year later he made his Proms debut to equal acclaim with Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. Now he has brought the rhapsodies together, making a commanding, lyrical case for their affinity on his second album for Warner Classics.

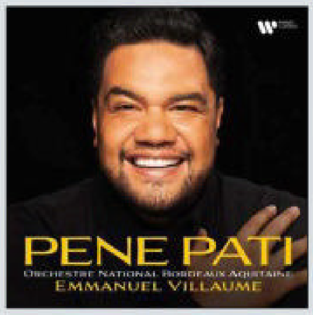
It's a joyful display, full of warmth, character and the singing tone that Bartlett has come to be known for. His staunch partners the London Philharmonic Orchestra perform with an invigorating freshness under conductor Joshua Weilerstein. The emphasis is on spontaneity rather than virtuosity for its own sake, with an elastic rapport between orchestra and soloist – or soloists, with clarinettist Benjamin Mellefont a bluesy treat in the Gershwin.

Indeed a spirit of the blues permeates the album, drawing threads between the rhapsodies through a jazzy turn of phrase here, a colourful interjection there – and through a canny selection of solo piano pieces and transcriptions which highlight a continuum between Rachmaninov's songs and Gershwin's American Songbook, via the pianist-composer Earl Wild.

Two Etudes from his *7 Virtuoso Etudes after Gershwin* complement wonderfully his transcriptions of Rachmaninov's *Vocalise* and 'Where Beauty Dwells', Op. 21 No. 7. Bartlett is especially tender in the latter and Gershwin's *The Man I Love* – while a romping *Polka de W.R.* finds its bouncy equivalent in *I Got Rhythm*. Great stuff. *Steph Power*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

OPERA CHOICE



Colour and character in this tenor's curtain raiser

Samoan-born Pene Pati performs a generous and beguiling debut programme, says ***John Allison***

Generosity of spirit: Pene Pati's passion for this music is palpable

SIMON FOWLER, GETTY

Pene Pati

Arias by Donizetti, Godard, Gounod, Massenet, Meyerbeer, Rossini and Verdi
Pene Pati (tenor); Choeur de l'Opéra National de Bordeaux; Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine/ Emmanuel Villaume
Warner 9029634863 79:09 mins

A generosity of spirit not always to be taken for granted with tenors is in constant evidence on Pene Pati's debut album on Warner Classics. The programme itself, ranging from some of the best-known tenor arias to real rarities, is generous in its length, suggesting how much the Samoan-born, New Zealand-raised artist enjoys his singing. 'I hope you enjoy listening to this album of a Pacific boy singing famous European arias,' he writes in the booklet; 'I'm excited for you to hear what the Pacific colour sounds like.' His voice certainly has the colour for both the French and Italian repertoire presented here. The sweet-toned elegance and sense of line he brings to the Duke (*Rigoletto*) in the opening tracks is matched with rollicking vigour when he gets to 'Possente amor', and supported idiomatically by the Bordeaux forces under Emmanuel Villaume, who finds the right *tinta* not only in Verdi but in the character of all this music.

Whether as Donizetti's Nemorino or Massenet's Des Grieux, roles he has sung on stage, Pati gives heartfelt accounts, and in the weightier assignment of Arnold (*Guillaume Tell*) he brings plangency of tone. The more unusual pieces (including from Verdi's *La battaglia di Legnano* and Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon*) are also well characterised; and with Meyerbeer and Gounod it's not only their famous titles we hear from but also *L'Étoile du Nord* and *Polyeucte*. An exquisitely sung aria from Godard's *Jocelyn* brings the disc to a quiet close.

> Pati gives wonderfully heartfelt performances of Donizetti and Massenet

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

Donizetti

The Three Queens: excerpts from Anna Bolena, Maria Stuarda and Roberto Devereux
Sondra Radvanovsky (soprano); with Kathleen Felty (mezzo-soprano), Lauren Decker (contralto), Eric Ferring, Mario Rojas (tenor), Christopher Kenney (baritone), David Weigel (bass-baritone), Anthony Reed (bass); Lyric Opera of Chicago/Riccardo Frizza
Pentatone PTC 5186 970
99:36 mins (2 discs)

Six years ago at the Met, Sondra Radvanovsky joined that select group of sopranos who have sung all three of Donizetti's 16th-century queens. Now she has taken the closing scenes of *Anna Bolena*, *Maria Stuarda* and *Roberto Devereux* for a live performance in her native city of Chicago

You need stamina, technique and vocal nerves of steel to rise to the challenge of 'creating' these three very different women, and an understanding that each work belongs to its own period in the composer's career as he bends the opera forms that he had inherited. The cabaletta, 'Coppia iniqua', in which Bolena curses Henry VIII and his new bride, is recognisably part of an inherited operatic tradition, while the two linked arias that end *Roberto Devereux* are a new departure both in form and psychology. Radvanovsky does not always manage to characterise the different women in these scenes. The singing is accurate, the decoration restrained, but they sound the same woman. She is at her best as Maria Stuarda with a fine version of Mary's prayer soaring over the chorus. Elsewhere her diction is sometimes clotted and her final top notes often abbreviated.

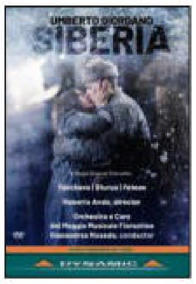
Her supporting artists, young singers from the Lyric Opera's development programme, are a mixed feast. Mario Rojas shows himself a useful bel canto tenor as Leicester in *Maria Stuarda* and Kathleen Felty is a deliciously fruity Sara, Duchess of Nottingham in *Roberto Devereux*. But it's the Queen the audience has come to hear and at the end Chicago salutes its own. *Christopher Cook*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Giordano

Siberia (DVD)

Sonya Yoncheva, Giorgi Sturua, George Petean, Caterina Piva; Coro e Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino/Gianandrea Noseda; dir. Roberto Andò (Florence, 2021)
Dynamic DVD: 37928; Blu-ray: 57928 104 mins



Notwithstanding the public success of *Andrea Chénier* (1896) and *Fedora* (1898), Umberto Giordano is said to have preferred *Siberia* (1903). It indeed shows technical advance over his previous works: while by no means short on melodic appeal, there's a canny use of local colour and a greater sophistication to the writing. In this production, director Roberto Andò moves the action forward from the early-19th century to the Stalinist 1930s – the horrific camps where the heroine, former courtesan Stephana, and her lover Vassili (who has killed her wealthy lover Alexis) end up were probably much the same. His second notion is to present the piece as a film in the process of being made: cameras and technical crew follow the singers around, the results presented on screens on either side of the stage. It's handsomely done in visual terms and works surprisingly well.

But it's the artistry with which the piece is tackled that convinces one that *Siberia* is unfairly neglected: the richness of tone, expressive subtlety and sense of style that Sonya Yoncheva (Stephana), Giorgi Sturua (Vassili) and George Petean (Gleby) lavish on the piece is just what is needed. Conductor Gianandrea Noseda presents Giordano's music to its best advantage. *George Hall*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
PICTURE & SOUND ★★★★★

Puccini

La bohème

Celine Byrne, Anna Devin, Merūnas Vitulskis; Irish National Opera Chorus & Orchestra/Sergio Alapont
Signum SIGCD702 107:03 mins (2 discs)

There is always room for a new recording of the world's most performed opera. And all credit to Irish National Opera for celebrating its fourth birthday with this recording of Puccini's heart-tugging masterpiece. Celine Byrne is a touching Mimì who grows ever weaker before our ears; and as her Rodolfo, Merūnas Vitulskis is capricious, jealous and head over heels with the girl from upstairs. They handle their Act I 'introduction' arias as if they had never shared their histories before, then 'O soave fanciulla' pulls the emotional rug from under your feet. Vitulskis begins to sound like a young Pavarotti and by the time they sing their farewell duet in Act III Byrne has banished thoughts of other Mimìs.

David Bižić and Anna Devin are a pleasing double-act as Marcello and Musetta, bickering their way in great style even if Devin hasn't quite found the right swing for Musetta's waltz. But in the final scene I defy anyone not to reach for a handkerchief when she produces the muff for Mimì. Even Colline's aria about his overcoat doesn't sound the add-on it sometimes is with John Molloy making you feel the cold and the threadbare life of a student in every mournful phrase.

It's Sergio Alapont in the pit who really makes the difference, subtly stretching Puccini's tempos for maximum dramatic effect, finding orchestral details in a familiar score that you had forgotten, or never properly heard, and above all letting his singers lead. *Christopher Cook*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Roussel

Le Testament de la Tante Caroline (Aunt Caroline's Will)

Marie Perbost, Marie Lenormand, Marion Gomar, Lucile Komitès, Charles Mesrine, Aurélien Gasse, Fabien Hyon, Till Fechner, Romain Dayez; Orchestre des Frivolités Parisiennes/Dylan Corlay
Naxos 8.660479 78:56 mins

At 68, egged on by Honegger and Ibert's financial success with musical comedy, Albert Roussel decided to write an *Opéra-Bouffe*. Playing safe, his librettist borrowed a story from de Maupassant about a *poule de luxe* who leaves her fortune to whichever of her nieces can produce an heir within a year.

If the composer hoped for money he was disappointed, as were the critics when Roussel insisted that his characters were 'entirely grotesque and … should be played without any fear of exaggerating their effect.' The work dipped at its premiere in Czechoslovakia in 1936 and dived at the Opéra-Comique the next year. Three decades on, a one-act version was carved from the original three which is what Les Frivolités Parisiennes have now recorded.

True to Roussel's instruction, the cast shout and bellow as if performing a demented version of Jarry's *Ubu Roi*. Since, once again, Naxos do not provide a text it's impossible to know if the dialogue is sparkling or leaden. The music generally lacks that lightness and grace we expect in this kind of Parisian work. Who would disagree with the critic who wrote that Roussel had 'difficulty adapting himself to simplicity'?

A pair of sweet-toothed airs almost touch the spot. 'Mademoiselle Irène d'Anjou', accompanied by the all-too-predictable flute solo is agreeably sung by Marie Perbost, and 'C'était un gars de la Bretagne' has a folkish whiff about it. Only Fabien Hyon the chauffeur has the vocal muscle to match his sex appeal. Spoiler alert – he gets his just rewards, the dosh. *Christopher Cook*

PERFORMANCE ★★
RECORDING ★★★

Made for Opera

– Violetta, Juliette, Lucia

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor – extracts; **Gounod:** Roméo et Juliette – extracts; **Verdi:** La traviata – extracts

Nadine Sierra (soprano); Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai/Riccardo Frizza
DG 486 0942 57:55 mins

Most operatic recital discs sample one aria each from a dozen operas. The American soprano Nadine Sierra's second album concentrates on just three roles in her active repertoire, whose solo numbers are presented complete.

The Italian operas suit Sierra to a T. Whichever extract from *La traviata* one chooses, her performance is accomplished, accurate and absolutely in character, also exemplifying her considered phrasing and easy access to her top register. The first-act double aria is fluent and sensitive, while 'Addio del passato' is imaginative in its expressive engagement.

In the Donizetti extracts, Lucia's fountain aria is beautifully shaped, once again its exactness of execution matched by clear interpretative aims. The Mad Scene is atmospherically realised, with conductor Riccardo Frizza, the chorus and orchestra entering fully into its spirit. The extensive cadenza with flute obbligato – not by Donizetti, but now thought to date from Melba's time (1888-89), and probably written by the diva's teacher Mathilde Marchesi – is included.

Equally as skilful as the preceding items, the *Roméo et Juliette* extracts are marginally less convincing: 'Je veux vivre' is virtuosic, but while a soprano such as Melba (who studied the role with the composer) interpreted the *acciaccaturas* as indicating breathless excitement, here they are merely notes. *George Hall*

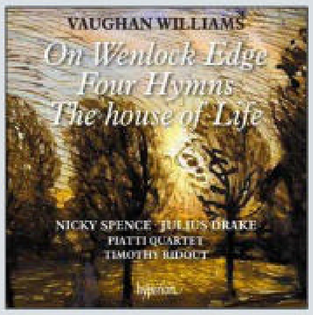
PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BACKGROUND TO…
Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux*

Though named after the 2nd Earl of Essex, this opera is as much about Queen Elizabeth I – albeit with no small amount of historical artistic licence. Premiered at Naples's Teatro San Carlo in October 1837, *Roberto Devereux* was written in the shadow of intense grief for the composer, who lost both parents, two children and his wife in the period leading up to its commission and writing. For the libretto he turned to regular collaborator Salvatore Cammarano, who was accused of plagiarising Felice Romani's earlier work *Il Conte d'Essex*.

Choral & Song

CHORAL & SONG CHOICE



A sublime Vaughan Williams songbook

Anthony Pryer finds much to enjoy in Nicky Spence's expressive performance

Vaughan Williams

On Wenlock Edge; The House of Life; Four Hymns*; Six English Folk Songs; 15 Folk Songs from the Eastern Counties

Nicky Spence (tenor), *Timothy Ridout (viola), Julius Drake (piano); Piatti Quartet

Hyperion CDA68378 69:05 mins

Nicky Spence was on the March issue's cover, and his energetic sense of drama and adaptable characterisations have led to an impressive 'rolling news' of successes. These include opera performances at the ENO, New York Met and Frankfurt, and recordings of Schubert, Strauss and Janáček. This new recording marks a return to familiar territory since he has already participated in four volumes of the folk song settings of Vaughan Williams recorded on Albion.

In the 1914 cycle of *Four Hymns*, it is 'Come Love' that shows his technical accomplishments best as he expressively utilises the full range of dynamics and seamlessly melds with the sonorities of the duetting viola, beautifully played by Timothy Ridout. Just occasionally I did wonder whether Spence was actually a high baritone rather than a tenor, for example at the slightly tense top B flat in 'Lord, Come Away' as compared with the rich, relaxed low A in 'Love's Minstrels' from *The House of Life* (1904). In the latter cycle it is the last song ('Love's Last Gift') that shows the remarkable musical sensitivity of his tuning as he glides effortlessly through the many enharmonic changes.

> *House of Life* shows Nicky Spence's musical sensitivity

The famous cycle *On Wenlock Edge* (1909) has often been recorded, but this is a fine rendering with 'Bredon Hill' providing some particularly sublime moments. As always Julius Drake's accompanying is evocative and nuanced, and in 'Is my team ploughing?' the Piatti Quartet swathe the song in a delicate veil of tensile sound.

PERFOMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Evocative support: Julius Drake's is a nuanced accompaniment

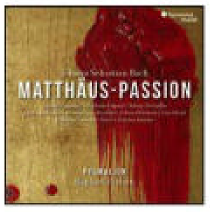
You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

JS Bach

St Matthew Passion

Sabine Devieilhe, Hana Blažiková (soprano), Lucile Richardot (mezzo-soprano), Tim Mead (countertenor), Julian Prégardien, Reinoud van Mechelen, Emiliano Gonzalez Toro (tenor), Stéphane Degout (baritone), Christian Immler (bass-baritone); Pygmalion/Raphaël Pichon

Harmonia Mundi HMM902691.93 147:40 mins (3 discs)



When he founded the ensemble, Raphaël Pichon knew that he wanted to mark Pygmalion's tenth anniversary with a performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. All their Bach leading up to it was, in a sense, a preparation for something that had to be 'earned' – yet he has still waited a few more years before making this much-considered recording. Not for Pichon a minimalist approach. His two choirs each muster 16 singers, and their respective orchestras slightly more instrumentalists. His continuo contains double bass and theorbo, and is deployed with considerable imagination, colouring and illuminating certain moments to add a new layer of meaning. And he relies on an old ally as Evangelist. Impeccable in his pacing and narrative empathy, Julian Prégardien is the project's lynchpin.

The choirs are razor-sharp in their ensemble, and if they seem initially soft-grained (in keeping with Pichon's essentially intimate approach), their incisiveness eventually locates real venom and mockery as the events of Part 2 intensify. They're not just beautifully balanced within themselves but also in relation to the instruments, encouraging some seductively crystal-clear textures. And Pichon's superb soloists are of a scale that pre-empts any violent gear changes. First among them is Stéphane Degout's Christus, every inch the New Testament Messiah rather than Old Testament prophet. Pichon's tempos sometimes generate problems either practical or interpretive, but he has the ability to create a musical space where a listener is allowed to ponder rather than being told what to think.

Paul Riley

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Lalande

Grands Motets; Dies irae; Miserere; Veni Creator

Ensemble Correspondances/ Sébastien Daucé

Harmonia Mundi HMM 902625 80:20 mins

Michel-Richard de Lalande was one of Louis XIV's most treasured court composers. As head of the *Musique de la Chapelle*, his *Grands Motets* rose to the challenges

of their liturgical purpose and extended to the very necessary job of glorifying the Sun King. Lalande was also, however, head of the *Musique de la Chambre* which meant that glorifying Louis became something of a 24-hour job – among Lalande's courtly duties were to write symphonies to accompany the *Grand Couvert*: suppers that the king ate in front of a live audience.

Lalande's *Grands Motets* possess an earthly, sensuous character dominated less by counterpoint than by rhythm and texture. The Dies Irae, composed in haste in May 1690 for the funeral of Dauphine Marie-Anne-Christine of Bavaria, is breathtakingly beautiful – it's thought that Louis admired it to the extent that it was performed at his own funeral in 1715. The penultimate movement, Pie Jesu Domine, embodies the work's emotional heft with an abundance of sighing phrases and aching harmonic suspensions. Conductor Sébastien Daucé allows his musicians to revel in these, with both orchestra and choir matching each other in the richness of their tone.

If anything, the Miserere from 1687, written for the final days of Holy Week, is even finer with an expressive power that sustains throughout its half-hour-or-so duration. With its remarkable harmonies, the Sacrificium Deo for low tenor solo and orchestra is surely the height of *Grand Siècle* sophistication. Barring one or two vocal moments, Ensemble Correspondances are perfect advocates for this music that at last receives the interpretation it deserves. *Oliver Condy*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Maconchy • Vaughan Williams

Songs, Vol. 1: Maconchy: Faustus; Love Stood At My Door etc; **Vaughan Williams:** Songs of Travel; Four Poems by Fredegond Shove etc
James Geer (tenor), Ronald Woodley (piano)
Resonus RES10299 66:15 mins

This the first of two albums prepared for this year's celebrations of Vaughan Williams's 150th birthday, entwining some of the master's songs with those of his pupil Elizabeth Maconchy. The Maconchy items, mostly unknown and unpublished, span the years from 1924 to 1971, by which time her musical language had toughened up far beyond the level of dissonance ever reached by her mentor. Yet if her fiercely abrasive dramatic scena *Faustus* appears a world away from the early 20th-century wayfaring of her teacher's *Songs of Travel*, it's still possible to trace links between the composers in some harmonic questionings, modal effects and a habit of plain speaking.

In the Vaughan Williams selections the album's novelty for the listener may come in the voice register used: tenor rather than the baritone range usually associated with the songs. Experienced partners in exploring 20th-century British repertoire, James Geer and Ronald Woodley specialise in honesty and clarity rather than big personalities and glamour. Other tenors may spoon out more honey, but there's still something valuable in Geer's agile phrasing and direct attack, not least when he finishes *Faustus* by toppling headlong down the scale, obviously following Mephistopheles straight into the bowels of hell.

The pair equally deliver when a more spiritual mood is required, as in Vaughan Williams's Shove settings of the 1920s – settings striking enough to recall Robert Louis Stevenson's words in one of the poems in *Songs of Travel*: 'Bright is the ring of words/When the right man rings them'. *Geoff Brown*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Pergolesi

Pergolesi: Stabat Mater; **Haydn:** Symphony No. 49, 'La Passione';
Jodie Devos (soprano), Adèle Charvet (mezzo-soprano); Le Concert de la Loge/Julien Chauvin
Alpha Classics ALPHA784 53:22 mins

Composed in the last weeks of Pergolesi's brief life, his Stabat Mater (1736) was one of the works that took his name around Europe: numerous performances were given in different versions, editions and arrangements. In Paris, where it seems to have arrived in 1736, it was taken up by the concert-giving organisation the *Concert de la Loge Olympique*, who performed it (usually in excerpts) every year from 1753 until their final season in 1790.

Baltic expression: conductor Kaspars Putniņš fashions a warm take on Rachmaninov

The version performed here is based on a contemporary Parisian publication with some minor matters of articulation, dynamics and instrumentation taken from manuscripts of the same period in the Bibliothèque nationale. In places, Pergolesi's solo lines are transferred to a substantial two-part children's chorus, which inevitably thickens the texture.

The two solo voices are well matched, though the mezzo's tone is edgier than that of her soprano colleague. Violinist/director Julien Chauvin presides over a pacy account that occasionally robs the music of breadth; some striking dissonances in the Sancta Mater need to register more strongly.

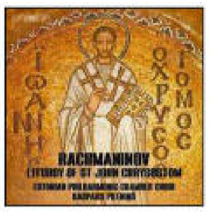
Haydn's 'Passione' Symphony (1768) fills up the disc, in a new version imagined by the conductor with organ replacing the original woodwind (oboes and horns).

The individual works were recorded in different venues, with the Haydn symphony coming over better in the Théâtre de Caen. *George Hall*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★

Rachmaninov

Liturgy of St John Chrysostom
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir/Kaspars Putniņš
BIS BIS-2571 (CD/SACD) 59:26 mins



Rachmaninov's *All-Night Vigil*, a towering masterpiece in Russian Orthodox liturgical music, has rather overshadowed his very fine *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* composed five years earlier in 1910. Unlike the *Vigil*, Rachmaninov's *Liturgy*, though steeped in his life-long love of Orthodox music and ceremony, does not make use of any of the traditional chants; and purists sternly noted its 'operatic nuances and symphonic refinements', such as the solo soprano entry with its chromatic inflection in 'Tebye poyem' ('We hymn thee') – something Rachmaninov artfully avoids in his *Vigil*.

Still, the *Liturgy* is a very attractive work, including such highlights as the beautiful 'Cherubic Hymn'. In this recording, the excellent Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir sings not only with exemplary tuning and purity of tone – with just a touch of vibrato in the sopranos – but with a degree of warmth and expression to make this a truly touching and uplifting performance. Every movement is given, though not all complete: many of the liturgical chants by the bass Deacon and the tenor Celebrant have been omitted, together with Rachmaninov's composed responses for the choir.

MARCO BORGGREVE, ALAMY

18+

WHAT IS

AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME -

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

Adding a sting to the tale: Jakub Józef Orliński impresses in Vivaldi's Stabat Mater

The opening 'Great Litany', for instance, is cut to a mere token starter rather than the Full Monty as given by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge with its two characterful soloists. But if you prefer a mixed-voiced choir rather than an all-male and rather Anglican experience, and don't mind missing some of the solo chanting and choral responses, then this can be warmly recommended.
Daniel Jaffé
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Vaughan Williams
– Earth's Wide Bounds

Communion Service in G minor; Valiant-for-Truth etc
Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea/William Vann; Joshua Ryan (organ)
Albion ALBCD051 78:05 mins

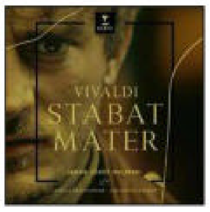
The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society continues to do sterling service in enabling first recordings of lesser-known Vaughan Williams compositions. The main premiere on this new release is the Communion Service in G minor, a re-casting of the Mass in G minor for use in the Church of England. The changes – including a text in English, re-ordered movements and some new music in the Responses – are certainly sufficient to warrant a recorded performance, and this is unquestionably a good one.

Vaughan Williams's setting splits the choir in two, and in addition requires a solo quartet. No fewer than 20 of the Royal Hospital choir's 24 singers are used as soloists across five movements, and if not always well matched in terms of vibrato their contributions are broadly convincing. Conductor William Vann skilfully combines purposeful tempos with a keen sensitivity to more reflective moments, notably in the Agnus Dei. An a cappella setting of Walt Whitman's poem *By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame* is the other first recording, and Vann is again an articulate guide, astutely balancing Vaughan Williams's often tightly bunched eight-part harmonies.

The Te Deum in G is a more straightforward piece, delivered with lusty relish by the Royal Hospital choir, particularly in the ringing antiphonal exchanges. *O Clap Your Hands* has similar ebullience, and the motet *Valiant-for-Truth* is another interpretive highlight, the choir shaping Bunyan's text with moving empathy. John Francis's booklet notes are exemplary, and the sound is excellent. Warmly recommended to Vaughan Williams completists.
Terry Blain
PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Vivaldi

Stabat Mater
Jakub Józef Orliński (countertenor); Capella Cracoviensis/ Jan Tomasz Adamus
Erato 9029506070 (EP/DVD) 18:25 mins



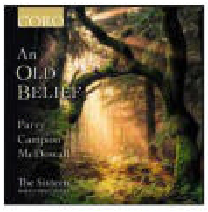
You're likely either to love or to loathe Sebastian Pańczyk's short film which provides a contemporary visual accompaniment to Vivaldi's Stabat Mater – rather in the manner of a pop or rock music video.

The Polish director's 20-minute movie updates and reflects on some of the timeless themes of the 13th-century Latin poem – love and violence, sin and salvation, anguish and empathy – but otherwise there is little direct correlation between the visuals and the words. The viewer journeys with the singer-protagonist through brutal scenes set in a melancholy and symbolic landscape of forests and lakes and urban sprawl, all the while (in the words of the poem) 'his sorrow sharing...his bitter anguish bearing'. Countertenor Jakub Jósef Orliński carries the surreal narrative well enough, with his sultry expressions and James Dean good looks, but the mute acting of the subsidiary characters, the visual clichés and the splatter effects of the opening are all rather amateurish.

Far more powerful is the musical performance. Orliński draws on a range of vocal colours and timbres to illuminate the words with stinging immediacy; his plangent voice is beautifully expressive but never forced. The period-instrument ensemble Capella Cracoviensis under Jan Tomasz Adamus provides stylish and dramatic support.
Kate Bolton-Porciatti
PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

An Old Belief

Campion: Author of Light; Never weather-beaten sail; Tune thy music to thy heart; **Howells:** Take him, earth, for cherishing; **Cecilia McDowall:** Good News from New England – An Unexpected Shore; **Parry:** Songs of Farewell; **Traditional:** Deo gracias, Anglia; Saint Thomas Honour We; Benedicite Deo; O Blessed Lord
The Sixteen/Harry Christophers
CORO COR16189 76:03 mins



Hubert Parry's *Songs of Farewell* (1916-18) offers a moving tribute those who fell in the First World War. Parry was profoundly affected by the conflict and the work seeks solace through texts that celebrate for peace and the hope of a better world. Parry's settings range from the elaborate polyphony he draws from Thomas Campion's 'Never weather-beaten sail' to the hymn-like serenity of Henry Vaughan's 'I know my soul hath power to know all things', while the final song 'Lord, let me know mine end' is the most magnificent of all, setting a passage from Psalm 93 for double choirs which blaze with hope and grief in equal measure.

The Sixteen is on terrific form throughout, bringing a glorious richness and depth of sound to this complex work. They embrace the texts with dynamism and sensitivity, while handling Parry's shifting tempos with total assurance.

The disc continues the theme of hope for a better world through three short works by Thomas Campion, a handful of medieval carols, and 'An unexpected Shore' by Cecilia McDowall (the first movement of her new work *Good News from New England*). McDowall's radiant anthem sets the words of Puritan separatist William Bradford as he recounts the voyage of the Mayflower. The work dextrously captures both the sway of the ocean and the relief of reaching firm ground, and this fine interpretation features a beautiful solo line from soprano Alexandra Kidgell.

A reminder of music's power to offer solace and hope, this is a disc to bring light to dark times.
Kate Wakeling
RECORDING ★★★★
PERFORMANCE ★★★★

Eastertide Evensong

Works by J Anderson, J Goss, Howells, Leighton, Stanford et al

Choir of St John's College, Cambridge/ Andrew Nethsingha

Signum Classics SIGCD 707 57:07 mins

This is St John's College's second live evensong recording, and one of the last recordings where its choir will be male-voice only – from January this year both girls and women are being admitted.

Any hint of the routine – the choir's director Andrew Nethsingha has over 8,000 evensong services to his credit – is immediately dissipated in a rapt rendition of Julian Anderson's anthem *My beloved spake*. Thrumming staccato accents on the word 'speaking', and a tingling crescendo on 'Arise', are just two of the subtleties Nethsingha elicits, and the feeling of tentative emergence from a long-endured winter is grippingly captured.

Psalms 12-14 are cast as mini-psychodramas, the chants fluidly parsed to point meaning in a way that will enthrall some, but perhaps strike others as too interventionist. In Howells's *Gloucester Service*, the long-range climax in the Nunc Dimittis is thrillingly constructed, while Leighton's Responses are movingly introspective. Taverner's five-part *Dum transisset Sabbatum* boasts immaculate balancing of the voice strands, the vernal treble line a particular pleasure. Organist James Anderson-Besant's ebullient take on the finale of Widor's *Symphonie VI* caps the service, to which Andrew Nethsingha's booklet notes are an edifying complement. *Terry Blain*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Lux Aeterna

Kodály: Evening; Evening Song; Mátra Pictures; **Ligeti:** Lux Aeterna; Mátraszentimrei Dalok; Three Fantasies after Friedrich Hölderlin; Morning

Danish National Vocal Ensemble/ Marcus Creed

OUR Recordings 6.220676 50:30 mins

Lux Aeterna, the Eternal Light that lends its name to this new release, is also the text of one of György Ligeti's most extraordinary choral works. Composed in 1966, it has been likened to music from another planet, and its ethereal clusters of sound do indeed suggest light from space – or light going out into space. Its ending, with seven bars of silence representing the ultimate 'light eternal', is the only unchallenging passage in the 16-voice, micropolyphonic score, which receives a performance of great virtuosity and breathtaking subtlety from the Danish National Vocal Ensemble under Marcus Creed.

For anyone unfamiliar with this repertoire, the disc will indeed shine new light on what choirs can do, and it covers a range of Ligeti's choral music, from the 'Night' (Ejszaka) and 'Morning' (Reggel) contrasts of the *Zwei a cappella-Chöre* – dating from 1955, the year before Russia's invasion of Hungary made the composer a refugee – to the demanding *Drei Phantasien nach Friedrich Hölderlin* of 1982. Ligeti's roots and the mentoring influence of Zoltán Kodály are revealed in the four earthy folksong arrangements comprising *Mátraszentimrei Dalok*.

These were collected in the same mountain region that Kodály celebrates in his a cappella masterpiece, *Mátrai képek* (Mátra Pictures), which closes this disc. But it also features two other Kodály treasures: *Este* (Evening), which in 1904 became his first published choral work, and *Esti Dal* (Evening Song), a haunting prayer for peace that must have seemed as urgent in 1938 as it does now. *John Allison*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Glorious riches: The Sixteen is on top form in Parry and McDowall

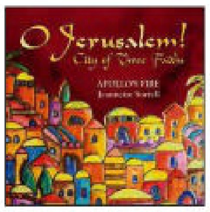
JIYANG CHEN, MARCEL ANTONISSE

O Jerusalem!

Sephardic, Medieval and Traditional Songs

Apollo's Fire/Jeannette Sorrell

Avie AV2501 54:10 mins



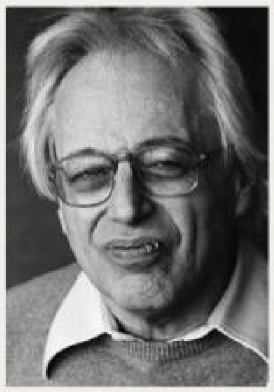
There's no shortage of musical projects that explore Jerusalem as a melting pot of cultures and faiths. Gladly, *O Jerusalem!* offers fresh insight into this musical 'crossroads' with a recording that brims with energy and imagination.

The disc is the brainchild of harpsichordist and conductor Jeannette Sorrell, who directs the celebrated period-instrument ensemble Apollo's Fire. The group explored some similar themes in their 2014 project *Sephardic Journey*, which interwove Sephardic folk song with early Baroque Hebrew choral music. *O Jerusalem!* broadens out to consider the musical interplay between Judaism, Islam and Christianity in Jerusalem's 'Four Quarters' – Jewish, Arab, Christian and Armenian – from the period of the late Medieval to the early Baroque (c1200 to 1650).

The result is a highly atmospheric 'tour' of the city, with each quarter explored via a handful of intersecting musical vignettes. Sorrell combines the excellent Apollo's Fire with some outstanding guest artists, and period Western instruments are joined by an array of extra musical forces including *ney* (end-blown flute), hammered dulcimer and accordion. We hear Sephardic chants, a new arrangement of a medieval sacred Armenian hymn for cello and double bass, and a mesmerising improvisation on the *oud* (fretless lute) by Palestinian musician Ronnie Malley. Toward the end of the disc, radiant excerpts of Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* burst forth from the choir as a nod to the influence of Jewish and Arabic sacred chanting on the late Renaissance composer's music.

Programmed with real vision and beautifully performed, this is a mesmerising portrait of Old Jerusalem reimagined through sound. *Kate Wakeling*

RECORDING ★★★★
PERFORMANCE ★★★★



BACKGROUND TO... Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna*

Ligeti's spacious and otherworldly choral masterpiece was originally commissioned by the Schola Cantorum Stuttgart for an album collection it recorded on the Wergo label in 1966 called *Neue Chormusik*. A fairly inauspicious start, perhaps, but two years later millions would be exposed to the work thanks to its inclusion on the soundtrack to Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Written for 16 voices, *Lux Aeterna* takes its lead from a Catholic mass and Ligeti employs complex harmonies and sound clusters that bring about visions of light from a world beyond our own.

CHAMBER CHOICE

Podger and Glynn cast Beethoven in a new light

Fresh performances make ***Julian Haylock*** feel as if he's discovering these famous violin sonatas anew

Exquisite artistry: Rachel Podger's response to Beethoven is poetic

Beethoven

Violin Sonatas Op. 12 No. 1; Op. 24; Op. 96
Rachel Podger (violin), Christopher Glynn (piano)
Channel Classics CCSSA44222 (CD/SACD) 67:17 mins

It is remarkable just how much one assumes about these sonatas from such post-Romantic legends as Yehudi Menuhin (DG), David Oistrakh (Philips) and Itzhak Perlman (Decca). Listening to Rachel Podger (on the 'Mauri' Strad) and Christopher Glynn (on an 1840 Erard) is like experiencing the music in the clear light of day for the first time. Gone are those texturally swamping instrumental resonances, while vibrato is employed exquisitely as a subtle colouration rather than as an expressive default, and dynamics are explored inquisitively (especially at the lower end), without 'intake-of-breath' rhetorical signalling. Freed from cloying legato devices at every turn, the music feels as though it has room to expand naturally.

There is also a powerful sense of Beethoven's coruscating invention emerging spontaneously from within, rather than having a generic preconception forced onto it. This is most notable in the elusive final sonata, which sounds here almost as if written by a different composer, so incredibly fine-tuned and poetically responsive are Podger's and Glynn's flights of fantasy. The earlier sonatas also emerge hot off the press, as if these distinguished players were discovering the music's unique qualities for the first time. A special word here also for Glynn's seemingly nonchalant despatch of Beethoven's often awkwardly displaced piano writing, despite the generally swift tempos.

> There's a powerful sense of Beethoven's invention emerging from within

Some may find the sensation of Beethoven free-floating rather than galumphing around in hobnail boots almost too much of a semantic redirection. Yet one thing's for certain – these groundbreaking sonatas will never quite seem the same again.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

JS Bach

Two-Part Inventions; Sinfonias; Trio Sonata No. 3; Organ Sonata No. 3 in D minor, BWV 527; Trio super 'Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend', BWV 655; Fuga super 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr', BWV 716; Goldberg Variations – Aria etc
Incantati
First Hand Records FHR122 59:57 mins

The exploratory incursions by Incantati into Bach's keyboard Inventions and Sinfonias are imaginative and, in the main, illuminating. The 15 two-part Inventions and the 15 three-part Sinfonias first appeared in early drafts in the *Clavierbüchlein* for Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, in 1722-23. Incantati have realised an entirely different sound spectrum with varying sizes of recorder, viola d'amore and viola da gamba. In addition to their selection of pieces from the Inventions and Sinfonias are three instrumentally treated chorales, the D minor Trio belonging to the Six Organ Trios, and the Aria upon which the *Goldberg Variations* are built.

The Inventions and Sinfonias had a declared didactic purpose in teaching performers how to play clearly, as well as fostering the art of contrapuntal composition and how to perfect a cantabile technique. The colourful means by which Incantati aspire to Bach's direction is pleasing, and, in respect of clarity and cantabile playing, they might at least have earned a nod of acceptance from the composer. Apart from the novel sonorities emerging from this intimate dialogue, the music's other chief beneficiary is one of linear definition: the Sinfonia in F major and the darkly hued F minor Sinfonia provide effective examples. Even so, it is the three chorales (BWV 655, 691 and 716), the Organ Trio and the *Goldberg* Aria that afford my ears the greater pleasure. They lend themselves to transcription more readily, perhaps, than the Inventions and Sinfonias which are pre-eminently keyboard pieces. Recorded sound is sympathetic. *Nicholas Anderson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★

Bargiel

Piano Trios Nos 1 & 2
Leonore Piano Trio
Hyperion CDA68342 73:31 mins

For most of us, and despite his splendid C minor Octet having appeared on Hyperion as long ago as 1989 (CDH 55043), Woldemar Bargiel (1828-97) remains a name on the fringes of the musical universe. His main tutors were Moscheles and Gade, and his early supporters included Mendelssohn and (as Peter Avis points out in his highly informative liner note) his half-brother-in-law Schumann. He was a successful composer of piano miniatures (recorded on Marco Polo 8.223606) and chamber music (including four string quartets, available on CPO 5550952), and in 1871 conducted the premiere of his only Symphony (Toccata TOCC 0277).

Bargiel's two piano trios are relatively early works, both dating from the 1850s. Not surprisingly, Schumann is the most profound influence here, although fascinating pre-echoes of Brahms can also be detected – the younger composer was then only in his early twenties. Yet for all that, there emerges a distinctive creative voice in the German Romantic tradition that deserves to be far better known.

The Leonore Trio is an outstanding ensemble, whose previous releases for Hyperion of music by Rimsky-Korsakov, Parry and Litolff have all been enthusiastically received. So often in the trio repertoire the piano is allowed to dominate, yet pianist Tim Horton, violinist Benjamin Nabarro and cellist Gemma Rosefield balance Bargiel's middle-register-dominated textures with such exquisite sensitivity and timing there is never any hint of overbalancing. This is music that by its very nature requires gentle coaxing and affectionate warmth to sound its best, and the Leonore responds with playing that possesses a radiant inner glow. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine this music played more captivatingly, captured in beguilingly natural sound by Andrew Keener and David Hinitt. *Julian Haylock*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

THERESA PEWAL, ERIC RICHMOND

Brahms

String Sextets Nos 1 & 2
Tabea Zimmermann (violin), Jean-Guihen Queyras (cello); Belcea Quartet
Alpha Classics ALPHA792 75:54 mins

Brahms's two string sextets Opp. 18 and 36 are masterpieces on a lavish scale. Using a string quartet and a darker half gives enough extra potential for density and variety, and Brahms embraces it with gusto. Both works predate his string quartets; if the youthful composer (he wrote Op. 18 aged 26) was intimidated by Beethoven's symphonies, that titan's string quartets were no less formidable a precedent and it was 1873 before Brahms could try that genre without later destroying his efforts. In the sextets he had the space to find his feet with confidence; when his friend Joseph Joachim, who led Op. 18's premiere in 1860, suggested he make amendments to the finale, Brahms ignored him. Written five years later, the G major work is slightly slenderer, subtler and, to quote Donald Tovey, 'ethereal'; one motif in the first movement enshrines the name of Brahms's former fiancée, Agathe von Siebold, the notes spelling AGAHE.

The two works have attracted numerous fine recordings, but here a luxury cast of the Belcea Quartet, Tabea Zimmermann and Jean-Guihen Queyras bring us a really special one – full-toned, warm-hearted and sensitive to the luscious and the sinuous alike. The close-knit ensemble judges just how to balance their performance, allowing the most important line at any one time to take the spotlight, without underplaying the ingenious interweaving of strands in the background. Tempos are beautifully judged and the six players seem to breathe as one without losing their individuality. Sound quality is excellent. *Jessica Duchen*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Balancing act: Leonore Piano Trio offers a glowing account of Bargiel trios

Stuart MacRae

Ursa Minor – Chamber Music: Ixion; I am Prometheus etc
Joshua Ellicott (tenor), Marcus Farnsworth (baritone); Hebrides Ensemble
Delphian DCD 34258 76:46 mins

This beautifully performed composer portrait from the Hebrides Ensemble captures Stuart MacRae at his most searching. Whether inspired by the tiniest lichen or loftiest constellation, or by human frailty couched in myth, a fascination with scale and perspective permeates the musical fabric – and, in the vocal works, the textual one. *I am Prometheus* and *Parable* (2018 and 2013, persuasively sung by Joshua Ellicott and Marcus Farnsworth respectively) explore complex character flaws and their far-reaching consequences.

Ixion (2013) continues the theme in instrumental pictures rather than narrative, but all three works share a keen dramatic sense – and a richly imaginative scoring which extends throughout, embracing tonality and microtones, swirling dissonance and static repose. *Tol-Pedn* (1999) and *cladonia bellidiflora* (2014, revised 2020) view the natural world with edgy wonder, while *Lento in memoriam Peter Maxwell Davies* (2016) and *fthinoporinos* (2001) pay direct and indirect tribute to musical forbears. Brief and poignant, *Dark Liquid* and *Diversion (The room behind the room behind the room)* are spontaneous responses to the lockdown, nocturnally explored in the haunting *Ursa Minor* (2020). *Steph Power*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Moeran

Violin Sonata in E minor; Sonata for Two Violins; Prelude for Cello and Piano; Piano Trio in D
Fidelio Trio
Resonus RES10296 66:27 mins

The members of the Fidelio Trio clearly do not see Moeran's music as a pale reflection of Vaughan Williams or Ireland. From the first bars of the Violin Sonata, it's clear that they are right inside the idiom, with an emotional freedom that allows the lyrical character full rein. You could wish for even lusher tone from violinist Darragh Morgan at times, in the most passionate moments of the first movement in particular, but the *Lento*'s contemplative mood and the the finale's dance-like character are strongly projected.

Moeran's style isn't quite as effective when he's deprived of a firm harmonic underpinning: the Sonata for Two Violins sometimes struggles to make a coherent impression, which the wide spacing of the soloists in the recording doesn't help. But there is variety of mood and melodic material, and the skittering central *Presto* is nicely paced by Morgan and Nicky Sweeney, before the folk-inflected counterpoint of the final *Passacaglia*.

The understated fervour of the Prelude shows off the chemistry between Tim Gill and pianist Mary Dullea, and makes a good

introduction to the Trio, the most substantial work on the disc. Again the folksy and the ecstatic are in a fine balance, and the textural and rhythmic aspects have a cumulative effect, with the players pacing and balancing the intertwining melodies with affection, finding the pulse of the dance in the third movement, and the melancholy which often lurks just below the surface.
Martin Cotton

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Mozart

Flute Quartets Nos 1-4
Sonora Slocum (flute); Dover Quartet; Escher String Quartet
Acis Productions APL98573 52:52 mins

Ferdinand Dejean, a wealthy amateur flute player, commissioned Mozart to write three 'easy and short' concertos and a couple of quartets. Much to his father's annoyance, Mozart never completed the task, citing his aversion to the flute; but the best of the quartets he did write, K285, is an attractive piece with a melancholy serenade-like slow movement in which the flute is accompanied by pizzicato strings throughout. The C major Quartet K285b, on the other hand, is almost certainly a forgery. Its first movement incorporates a ten-bar sketch by Mozart whose chromatic style sits rather awkwardly in its context, while the second movement is a workmanlike arrangement of the variations from the Serenade for 13 winds K361.

Sonora Slocum is principal flautist with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and she plays all this music with obvious affection and considerable skill. Her warmth of tone for the slow movement of K285 is admirable, but the players make heavy weather of the variation themes in the quartets K285b and K298, both of which need to flow more naturally. The recording is on the dry side, placing the flute a little too close for comfort. *Misha Donat*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★

From Italy To Persia

Works by Askari, Pasculli, Rouhani, Vali and Yahya
Aryan Gheitasi (oboe), Soroush Sadeghi (piano)
Ars Produktion ARS38604 47:41 mins

The liner note's first paragraph suggests that Persian music is 'primarily performed on historical instruments', while this recording uses 'modern' instruments. Nonsense! Traditional Persian music – as the classical music of Iran is still called by Iranian musicians today – is alive and well, and played on instruments which may have a long history, but which are every bit as 'modern' as the piano and oboe. I'm speaking primarily about the *sorna* oboe and the breathy, caressingly sweet *ney* flute, and it's the latter which usually takes the melodic role which Aryan Gheitasi's oboe takes here.

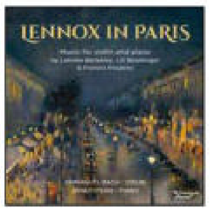
Apart from the Pasculli pieces (entirely European, and rather out of place here), and from the Rouhani pieces (which sound like latter-day Shostakovich), most of the pieces on this release purport to draw their inspiration from Persian folk melodies. But despite Gheitasi's virtuosity, these extremely short arrangements simply don't evoke that provenance at all.

It is indeed a tall order to translate microtonal songs into a diatonic soundworld, but it can be done. Listen to Komitas's arrangements of Armenian dances as played on the piano by Lusine Grigoryan or Grigory Sokolov: subtle shades of colour and delicate rhythmic inflections really can conjure up an ambience which is refreshingly non-European. There is plenty of potential in the music of these composers, but it should be allowed to fly free and be itself, rather than being lumbered with a label which doesn't fit. *Michael Church*

PERFORMANCE ★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Lennox in Paris

L Berkeley: Violin Sonata No. 1; Violin Sonatina; Elegy & Toccata, Op. 33; **L Boulanger:** D'un matin de printemps; Two Pieces; **Poulenc:** Violin Sonata etc
Emmanuel Bach (violin), Jenny Stern (piano)
Willowhayne WHR070 73:31 mins



A better title might be 'Homage to Nadia', since Nadia Boulanger is the thread connecting these three composers. The pieces by her younger sister, Lili, confirm the sense of loss one feels at her early death, far outpacing, as they do, the 19th-century notion of the 'lady composer'. I would prefer to have the piano's staccato notes free of pedal, but otherwise the performers do justice to these short works, especially to the Nocturne with its echoes of Debussy's *Faune*.

Lennox Berkeley never published his First Violin Sonata, and I can't say I regret this – it's mostly an imitation of the gritty Honegger – but the Sonatina and the *Elegy and Toccata*, written in England, show him at his best, and inspire the best playing. I don't feel, though, that the players are really happy in the Poulenc Sonata, not least by the way they alter his indications: the last chord of the first movement is marked *ppp*, on the brink of silence. But not here. Also the last chord of the whole work is rhythmically adrift.

Finally, it would seem wise for any violinist wanting to play Heifetz's arrangements of two of Poulenc's *Mouvements perpétuels* and his *Presto* in B flat to bear in mind that Heifetz's own recordings of these are on YouTube. The composer's marking on the latter is (in French) *Presto possible* and, needless to say, the miraculous Heifetz breasts the tape lengths ahead. *Roger Nichols*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Soundscapes

Elgar: Violin Sonata; **Mendelssohn:** Violin Sonata in F; May Breezes; **De Raaff:** Violin Sonata No. 2; **plus works by Castelnuovo-Tedesco and F Price**
Tosca Opdam (violin), Alexander Ullman (piano)
Challenge Classics CC72893 70:21 mins

In her liner note, Dutch violinist Tosca Opdam draws parallels between the three sonatas on this album and the environments which helped inspire them: the glorious Sussex countryside for the Elgar, Mendelssohn's Swiss watercolour paintings for his F major Sonata, and Willem de Kooning's 1977 painting *North Atlantic Light*, which formed the basis of Robin de Raaff's eponymous Second Sonata. In the Elgar, one can indeed sense the music being etched in unusual detail by Opdam and Alexander Ullman, with ravishingly poetic playing in the outer movements suggesting the composer pausing to take in some new panoramic view. Ullman works wonders with Elgar's piano figurations, conjuring up the evocative sounds of a rippling brook and countryside breezes. A shade more sonic ambience would have helped enhance the illusion.

The Mendelssohn is given a chamber-scale performance, gently shaded and replete with deft touches that fully capture the music's radiant innocence. The De Raaff (written for and premiered by Opdam) is a highly evocative soundscape, in which Opdam assumes the role of painter 'sketching notes while looking for solid ground'. The three miniatures – Florence Price's *The Deserted Garden*, Mendelssohn's 'May Breezes' from *Songs without Words*, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Sea Murmurs* – are also performed with captivating sensitivity, bringing their pictorial inspirations irresistibly to mind. *Julian Haylock*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

ALAMY

BACKGROUND TO... Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Sea Murmurs*

This short piece for violin and piano takes its melody from one of the composer's 1920s *Shakespeare Songs* ('Arise', from *Cymbeline*). Before his move to the US, Castelnuovo-Tedesco had already made connections with American orchestras and high-profile soloists. It was Jascha Heifetz who asked for a recital piece in 1932 and *Sea Murmurs* was the result – co-credited to Heifetz, who was given free rein to make it his own. The violinist played the piece for the next 40 years, even including it in his final public programme in 1972.

INSTRUMENTAL CHOICE

An impressive first volume of solo Bach

Frank Peter Zimmermann is right at home with this music, says *Jan Smaczny*

JS Bach

Solo Violin Sonatas & Partitas, Vol. 1: Sonata No. 2; Partitas Nos 2 & 3
Frank Peter Zimmermann (violin)
BIS BIS-2577 (CD/SACD) 67:36 mins

A steady tread of fine performances of Bach's solo violin Sonatas and Partitas during the last four years is testimony both to the allure and the technical brilliance of these remarkable works. The late 17th and 18th centuries are replete with music – from Biber to Locatelli – that tests the limits of solo violin virtuosity, and yet Bach's contribution remains the touchstone for modern soloists. While certainly a yardstick by which to measure any aspiring virtuoso, for the listener they offer myriad rewards from contrapuntal expertise in the fugues to sheer uninhibited exuberance in the dances alongside dizzying exhilaration in the E major Partita's Prelude.

If not the last word, Zimmermann's interpretations are the most impressive I have heard in recent years. The tone is magnificently focused, occasionally throaty but without excessive vibrato. His structural approach avoids being didactic but instead allows each movement to 'react' to its predecessor in a satisfying realisation of the whole. In the A minor Sonata, for example, the initial Grave has a reflective, soulful quality while the following Fuga balances this with both rigour and playfulness. In all cases the dance movements manage to be joyous as well as thoughtful, and the celebrated concluding Chaconne of the D minor Partita is one of the most compelling I have encountered, constantly illuminating the abundant range of textures Bach weaves from the opening melody. The two acoustics used for the recordings are resonant, but throughout enhance the superb clarity of the playing.

The acoustics enhance the clarity of the playing throughout

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

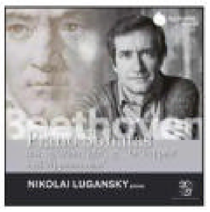
Compelling account: Zimmermann's tone is magnificently focused

HAROLD HOFFMAN

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at **www.classical-music.com**

Beethoven

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 2: No. 14, 'Moonlight'; No. 17, 'Tempest'; No. 23, 'Appassionata'
Nikolai Lugansky (piano)
Harmonia Mundi HMM902442 66:43 mins



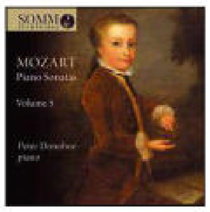
This second release in Nikolai Lugansky's ongoing Beethoven cycle comprises three of the most famous 'named' sonatas, although the 'Moonlight' and the 'Appassionata' only acquired their titles after Beethoven's death and the evidence that he associated the D minor Sonata with Shakespeare's *Tempest* rests on the testimony of his unreliable biographer Anton Schindler. Since there is a clear line of stylistic development between Opp. 27, 31 and 57, it is odd that the 'Appassionata' appears here after the 'Moonlight', placing the 'Tempest' last: order of composition would surely make more musical sense? On the other hand, the direct, full recorded sound captures this player's qualities almost to a fault.

Here, amplified by the resources of a modern concert grand (its make unspecified in the notes), is all the cast-iron virtuosity, gestural vehemence and the depth of sonority of the Russian school that is required to play Rachmaninov. But Beethoven? Lugansky launches the 'Moonlight', marked *pianissimo* by the composer, at a weighty *mezzo-piano*, rising at times to near *forte*, while the *Allegretto* middle movement is too stolidly articulated to dance. He does find a gentler touch for those mysterious slow arpeggios and recitatives that punctate the impetuous first movement of the 'Tempest' Sonata. Yet the most successful reading is, predictably, the 'Appassionata', with a fine, sweeping account of the vast first movement and an almost visceral fury in the headlong peroration of the finale. An imposing recital, without doubt, but not always easy to warm to.
Bayan Northcott

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Mozart

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 5: No. 3 in B flat, K281; No. 13 in B flat, K333; No. 15 in F, K533/494
Peter Donohoe (piano)
SOMM SOMMCD 0648 62:27 mins



For Volume 5 of this on-going cycle, Peter Donohoe turns to three of the pieces that are most perennially popular with pianists: the composite late F major Sonata, lithe and virtuosic; and two in B flat, the early, intricately decorated K281 and the wonderfully tender and down-to-earth K333. The pieces may be small in scale, but it's top-quality Mozart from

start to finish. The finale of K333 includes a cadenza that suggests a conceptual interchange with his piano concertos, and some of the movements could well have been recast as operatic arias or ensembles.

Donohoe is particularly attentive to this side of Mozart's expression, prioritising a cantabile tone, vivid articulation and songful phrasing. Although, realistically enough, he eschews any temptation to pretend he is playing a fortepiano, he never lets the size of the tone overwhelm the sonatas' intimacy; he uses pedal judiciously and the music's spare textures are always clear and well balanced. In a few episodes the touch can become slightly over-solid – the complex, triplet-laden slow movement of the F major Sonata, for instance – but at other times Donohoe's straightforward, direct approach and sparky non-legatos pay ample dividends. The recorded sound is close without excessive resonance. *Jessica Duchen*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Schubert

Piano Sonatas, D664, D769a & D894
Stephen Hough (piano)
Hyperion CDA68370 57:58 mins

Stephen Hough plays a C Bechstein Model D for this Schubert recording, and although the booklet notes don't reveal the reasons for his choice, there are clues in the sound. There's an intimacy to the instrument that suits the introspection of the G major Sonata, D894 and its upper register has a lovely ringing quality for the cantabile Sonata in A major, D664. In short, Hough's decision works well. And if he doesn't go as far as András Schiff, who recorded Schubert on a mellow fortepiano, Hough's light pedalling and nimble, clean articulation evokes the spirit of an earlier world of keyboards.

In Hough's hands, this is Schubert for the salon rather than the concert hall, superbly captured by Hyperion. The elegant restraint of Hough's playing highlights the Classical lines of Schubert's music. The G major Sonata, as Misha Donat's excellent booklet notes point out, is an intimate work, in which each movement ends quietly. Hough captures that subdued mood, with lilting grace in the *Menuetto* and soft insistence in the finale. Yet for all this performance's gentle poise, I feel there's a rapt quality that is missing. I was left uncertain if this is truly the music of Hough's heart.

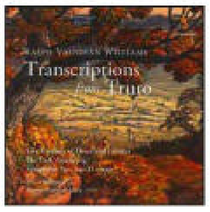
That, however, may be a purely subjective reaction, because objectively Hough offers musicianship of the finest order. And after the fleeting Sonata in E minor fragment, Hough makes the Sonata in A major, D664 all beguiling simplicity. He sings in the *Allegro moderato*, muses in the *Andante* and dances in the finale. It's a graceful delight. *Rebecca Franks*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Voyage of discovery: Fenella Humphreys showcases Caprices

Vaughan Williams
– Transcriptions from Truro

Five Variants on Dives and Lazarus; The Lark Ascending*; Symphony No. 5
*Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin); David Briggs (organ)
Albion ALBCD049 76:26 mins



Originally for strings and harp, the elaborate contrapuntal writing of *Five Variants* doesn't always come across on the organ. Partly this is due to Truro Cathedral's reverberant acoustic, which warms yet blurs the sound. And I miss the harp, which points up the texture of the orchestral version,.

That's where the solo violin in *The Lark Ascending* scores, providing a contrast in colour to the harmonic bed of the organ. The acoustic of the cathedral gives Rupert Marshall-Luck's playing a sheen, particularly in the slow outer sections: the more folksy dance in the middle works less well, and exposes a few insecurities of pitch in the higher registers. But the final ethereal ascent is very affecting.

The Symphony's opening, much of it built over long pedal points, transfers naturally to organ, and Briggs paces it well, using registration to articulate texture and build up tension. Again, the faster music of the central *Allegro* isn't as effective, and the *Scherzo*'s flurries and cross-rhythms don't always have an impact. We're on much firmer ground in the *Romanza*, where the slow tempo and the sustained timbre bring out the music's intimate, devotional character, and the final *Passacaglia*, another natural fit for the organ, presents a touching farewell. *Martin Cotton*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Caprices

Works by Bacewicz, Beamish, E Howard, Kreisler, MacRae, Paganini, R Panufnik, Waley-Cohen, Wallen et al
Fenella Humphreys (violin)
Rubicon RCD1074 76:36 mins

The theme from Paganini's Caprice No. 24 is one of most recognisable and imitated melodies, widely transcribed (such as the version recorded by trumpeter Alison Balsom) and transformed (by Brahms, Rachmaninov, Liebermann and many others). Violinist Fenella Humphreys takes the solo work as a jumping-off point for a 'Now that's what I call caprices' album, a compelling collection of contemporary responses – several commissioned by Humphreys – set alongside historic pieces.

The new set of variations features compact offerings from 12 different composers, resulting in a diverse but surprisingly cohesive group. From Emily Howard's elegant, linear melody to Sally Beamish's craggy soundscape, Humphreys channels Paganini's virtuosity. She also displays playfulness and a light touch in pieces such as that by Héloïse Werner, which requires the violinist to sing to ten while playing.

Paganini's iconic caprice and his own variations – as well as Nos 9 and 13 – appear partway through the programme; subtle anchors as Humphreys charters the harmonically choppy seas of Oliver Leith's three-part *Goat Head* and Laurence Osborn's *Rendering Error*. Roxanna Panufnik's *Hora Bessarabia*, commissioned for the 2016 Menuhin Competition and receiving its premiere recording here, brings further contrast as Humphreys juxtaposes delicate breathy balletic phrases with fast-pased horas. The opening caprice from Mark O'Connor's suite buzzes – as does Freya Waley-Cohen's *Caffeine*, written during a coffee-fuelled flight and arranged especially for Humphreys, beautifully transformed from its original incarnation for recorder. *Claire Jackson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

Encores

Works by Albéniz, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Liszt, Schubert and R Schumann
Daniel Barenboim (piano)
DG 486 0932 54:05 mins

An encore is an extra gift that an artist gives an audience at the end of a concert. How then, without context, to capture that moment of generosity in the recording studio – and not just once, but enough times to fill a whole disc with encores? Why not simply title 'Famous Romantic Piano Pieces'?

The answer lies, I'd argue, in mood. Recorded during the era of coronavirus lockdowns, when live audiences and full concert halls were a fanciful dream, Barenboim nonetheless creates an intimacy that makes each piece feel special, playing with consummate eloquence. There's a meditative feel to much of the music, a sense of quiet focus. The rippling serenity of Schubert's Impromptu No. 3 in G flat, which opens the disc, sets the tone. But I could point also to the exquisite reverie of Schumann's *Träumerei*, with the phrasing just so, or the languid melody of the same composer's 'Des Abends'.

If the fire of Schumann's 'Aufschwung' doesn't burn as brightly as I would like, nor the turmoil of Chopin's Etude No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 10 feel as passionate as it might, then there are other joys. The tiny rubatos in Schubert's *Moments musicaux* No. 3, for instance, or the pure poetry he evokes with Debussy's 'Clair de Lune'. It's an album that repays repeat listenings. *Rebecca Franks*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★

My Life in Music

Works by JS Bach, Barber, Chopin, Debussy, Grieg and Rachmaninov
Ruth Slenczynska (piano)
Decca 485 2255 67:41 mins

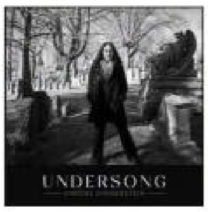
One of the most famous child prodigies of the 20th century, who made her debut aged four, the 97-year-old pianist Ruth Slenczynska had a remarkable if sometimes curious career. The pressures of being a prodigy might explain an early burnout and temporary withdrawal from music, but she went on to enjoy a solid career and performed for many US presidents, all the way back to Harold Truman with whom she played duets. Now claimed as Rachmaninov's last living pupil, she also studied with Alfred Cortot, Josef Hofmann and Artur Schnabel. Such a pedigree is self-recommending, but whether any pianist's reputation is enhanced by recording in their mid 90s is another matter.

Recorded last year, this is clearly an autobiographical portrait, beginning appropriately enough with Rachmaninov, paying tribute to her Polish roots (she was born in Sacramento, California, to emigré parents) with Chopin and also to her friendship with Samuel Barber. Understandably, Slenczynska's playing is now cautious, almost mechanical in places, with often prosaic results. It is possibly the fault of the recording – clear but too close-up to be flattering – that Rachmaninov's Prelude in G major feels a little lumpy, and Chopin's great Fantaisie in F minor emerges squarely. Her affection for Barber comes across in the Nocturne 'Homage to John Field', one of the most interesting tracks. Grieg, Debussy and Bach complete a bitty picture: listeners wanting to hear commanding technique and musical imagination from Slenczynska should turn to the ten-disc box of her vintage recordings re-released by Eloquence a year ago. *John Allison*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★

Undersong

Works by Couperin, Glass, Satie and Schumann
Simone Dinnerstein (piano)
Orange Mountain OMM0156 71:56 mins



'This is music to get lost in,' writes Simone Dinnerstein of *Undersong*, a collection of works by Couperin, Schumann, Philip Glass and Satie. Each piece is created around a refrain – the titular 'undersong' – a constant, shapeshifting presence. This repetition is subtle, as in Schumann's shimmering *Arabesque*, and explicit, as in *Mad Rush* by Glass, where the phrases loop and entwine. The programme reflects Dinnerstein's lockdown experiences in Brooklyn, where the pianist took the same daily walk, along a familiar – yet gently changing – path in Green-Wood Cemetery.

The elasticity of time is further represented in Couperin's joyful *Tic Toc Choc*, a much-transcribed piece originally composed for harpsichord and now widely adopted by pianists. Dinnerstein takes a more percussive approach than Alexandre Tharaud (Harmonia Mundi; 2007), allowing just the right amount of space between the notes. The recording is clear rather than resonant, which suits Dinnerstein's chosen voice leading. The American pianist wasn't the only one to turn to Couperin in recent times of need: Angela Hewitt also recorded *Les Barricades Mystérieuses* as part of her lockdown YouTube series. Dinnerstein's is more expansive than Hewitt's – the slower pace and gently blurred ornamentation give this work a modern edge.

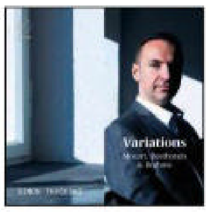
Schumann's 30-minute *Kreisleriana*, composed at the high-point of his career, recalls the fictional musician who appears in the writings of ETA Hoffmann. Dinnerstein imbues this critical piece with the necessary darkness and restraint – particularly in the slower interior movements. The final *Schnell und spielend* is a little ponderous. *Claire Jackson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★
RECORDING ★★★

Refining variations: Simon Trpčeski shines in Brahms and Beethoven

Variations

Beethoven: Variations on a Russian Dance; 32 Variations on an Original Theme in C minor, WoO 80; **Brahms:** Variations on a theme by Schumann in F sharp minor, Op. 9; **Mozart:** Variations on Paisiello's 'Salve tu, Domine'; Variations on Sarti's 'Come un'agnello'
Simon Trpčeski (piano)
Linn Records CKD682 62:11 mins



Sets of variations were one of the mainstays of Classical and Romantic pianism, and part of the allure of this recording lies in the fact that three of its five works are seldom performed. In the 18th century, melodies were often taken from operas to serve as variation-fodder, as were the two by Mozart here. And if six of the variations on *Come un'agnello* are of dubious provenance, the melody had a particular significance for Mozart: he used it to provide Giovanni's dinnertime entertainment in Act II of *Don Giovanni*.

Beethoven's *Variations on a Russian Dance* were based on an extract from a ballet by the Czech composer Paul Wranitzky, and as Geoffrey Norris observes in his liner note, they display the bravura, spontaneity and ingenuity of the Op. 10 piano sonatas with which they were cognate. His *32 Variations on an Original Theme* were composed while he was working on the 'Eroica' Symphony and 'Appassionata', and they share the breathtaking qualities of those much larger works. Brahms's *Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann* emerged out of that cauldron of emotion which was the Schumann household after the composer had tried to drown himself in the Rhine. Clara had written a set of variations on the *Bunte Blätter* theme the year before, and Brahms's set were dedicated to her.

If the Mozart variations are nothing special, those by Beethoven and Brahms are masterpieces, which Trpčeski conveys with his characteristic refinement. His Brahms has grave beauty, and his Beethoven – delivered with an exceptionally light touch – manages to sound both intimate and earth-shaking. *Michael Church*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

MATTHEW JOHNSON, BENJAMIN EALOVEGA

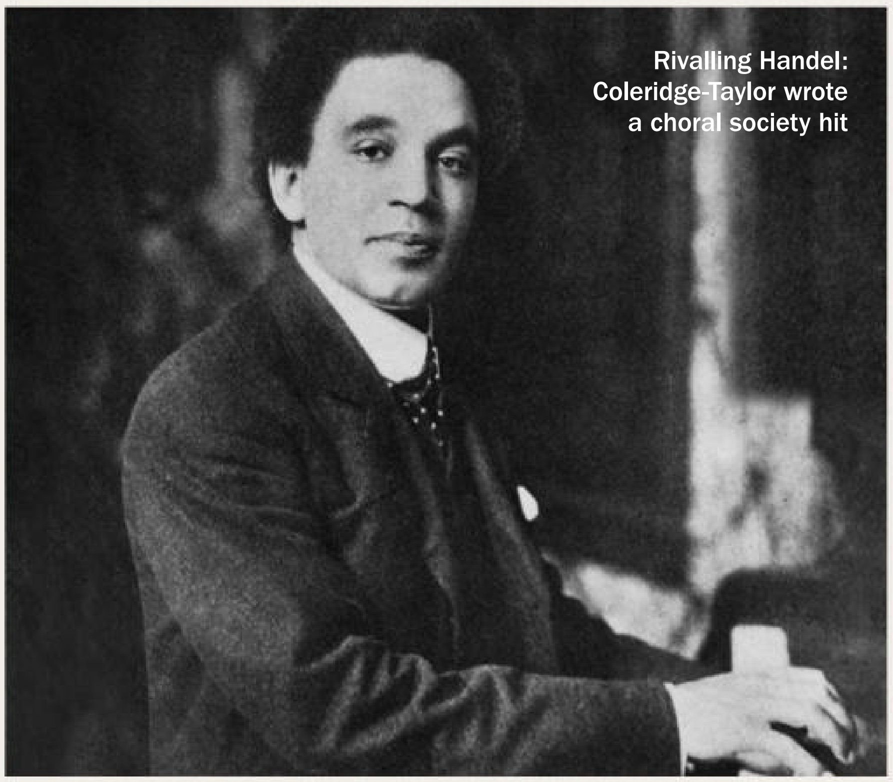
Reissues

Christopher Dingle uncovers past gems by Daniil Shafran and Kathleen Ferrier

REISSUES CHOICE

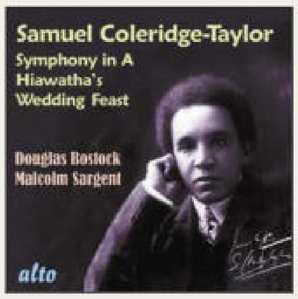
The British Dvořák

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was one of England's brightest hopes – and this recording shows why



Rivalling Handel: Coleridge-Taylor wrote a choral society hit

GETTY



Coleridge-Taylor

Symphony in A minor, Op. 8*; Hiawatha's Wedding Feast**

*Aarhus Symphony Orchestra/Douglas Bostock; **Richard Lewis (tenor); Royal Choral Society; Philharmonia Orchestra/Malcolm Sargent

Alto ALC 1462 68:10 mins

This disc pairs important recordings of two major works, one astonishingly successful in its time, the other barely known. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Symphony in A minor from 1896 may be a student offering, but what a precocious student! The command of form and handling of the orchestra are thoroughly convincing and engaging. As for many symphonists of the time, Dvořák's influence is apparent. There is no doubting the strength of Coleridge-Taylor's invention, though, in this generally affable work, especially in this sprightly performance from the Aarhus Orchestra conducted by Douglas Bostock.

It was just two years after the symphony that Coleridge-Taylor wrote *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, by far the most successful choral work of its age, one that rivalled Handel's *Messiah* for popularity. Combined with its two successors as *The Song of Hiawatha*, it became an annual two-week fixture at the Royal Albert Hall between the wars, championed by Sir Malcolm Sargent. His exuberant 1962 recording with the Royal Choral Society and Philharmonia Orchestra is an invaluable document of a remarkable phenomenon arising from some utterly enchanting music. ★★★★★

May round-up

A quarter of a century has passed since the death of Russian cellist ***Daniil Shafran***. He received

similar acclaim to Rostropovich in his homeland, the pair sharing first prizes in various competitions, but the infrequency of Shafran's performances and recordings in the West left him overshadowed here. Though not to everyone's taste, many cellists regard his emotionally charged, free-spirited, yet finely nuanced playing as essential listening, and ***Cello Masterworks*** contains three particularly fine performances. Shafran glides effortlessly through Schubert's 'Arpeggione' Sonata with beguiling insouciance, while Shostakovich's Cello Sonata is full of incident without losing sight of the whole. Lydia Pecherskaya is his excellent partner in these New York recordings made a few weeks after their 1961 Carnegie Hall debut. The disc opens with an intimate, yet spritely account of a lifelong Shafran favourite, Haydn's D major Cello Concerto, captured in Moscow with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra under a youthful Neeme Järvi. *(Parnassus, PACL 95008 ★★★★★)*

A bracing performance of Haydn's 'Lark' Quartet raises the curtain on a disc devoted to the ***American Art Quartet***. An enterprising West coast

ensemble, led by the remarkable husband-and-wife team of violinist Eudice Shapiro and cellist Victor Gottlieb, they epitomised the chamber ideal of music making among friends. As such, a palpable sense of enjoyment shines through, even if their straightforward stylistic approach both to the Haydn and Beethoven's E flat major 'Harp' Quartet rarely sparks the imagination. They are joined in Mozart's Clarinet Quintet by Benny Goodman, who abandons the flair of his jazz playing for a prim demeanour that's short of feeling. *(Biddulph, 85011-2 ★★★)*

Such a charge could never be made of ***Kathleen Ferrier Sings Bach & Handel***. The disc presents Ferrier's rightly lauded album of arias made with Sir Adrian Boult conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra, with an additional five equally delectable tracks to make a generous offering.

The style is not remotely historically informed and the recorded sound is decidedly dated, but even the hardest of hearts will melt on hearing Ferrier's achingly beautiful performance of 'All is fulfilled'. *(Alto ALC 1457 ★★★★★)*

Another singer at the height of her powers, Jane Manning, can be heard in a digital-only release from new music ensemble ***Psappha***. Written in 1974, *Miss Donnithorne's Maggot* was Peter Maxwell Davies's follow-up to *Eight Songs for a Mad*

King. It may not pack quite the same punch as that work, but it is still an enthralling half-hour *tour de force* for Manning, while Psappha, performing without a conductor, are no less impressive. An illuminating interview with the composer adds some value to an otherwise modestly proportioned release. *(NMC PSA1001 ★★★★)*

Pro et Contra is a decidedly different half-hour by Maxwell Davies's Tatar-Russian near-contemporary ***Sofia Gubaidulina***. A ravishing exploration of subtle and occasionally coruscating

colours, this compelling orchestral triptych from the late 1980s is given a taut reading by Johannes Kalitzke and Hannover's NDR Radio Philharmonic. Two early works complete the disc, *Concordanza* and *Fairytale Poem/ Marchenbild*, the latter conducted by Paul Klee. They may be less convincing, but still have plenty of ear-catching moments. *(CPO 999 164 2 ★★★★)*

KINGS PLACE VOICES UNWRAPPED

The Power of Singing

Throughout 2022

Roderick Williams
Voices Unwrapped Artist-in-Focus

5 May – with pianist Paul Cibis
27 May – with soprano Lucy Crowe in Sound Voice Project
10 Jul – Handel's Messiah Workshop

Highlights

5 Jun
Iestyn Davies with Olivia Chaney

10 Jun
Musica Secreta
Motets by Suor Leonora d'Este and Suor Maria Celeste Galilei

19 Jun
Manchester Collective with Ruby Hughes
Strozzi | Britten
Mustonen | Finnis

30 Sep
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
Haydn: Nelson Mass

20 Oct
The Gesualdo Six
Mirror of Time – from Josquin to Pärt

23 Oct
Aurora Orchestra with Nicholas Mulroy
Leipzig, London, Latin America

2 Nov
Explore Ensemble with Juliet Fraser
Lisa Illean | Lawrence Dunn
Oliver Leith
Angharad Davies

6 Nov
The Feinstein Ensemble & London Bach Singers
Bach: Coffee & Peasant cantatas

17 Nov
The Tallis Scholars
Allegri | Tallis | Josquin

24 Nov
The Sixteen
The Song of Songs

3 Dec
BBC Singers with Abel Selaocoe
Rachmaninov | Gubaidulina

11 Dec
Aurora Orchestra
Shostakovich: Symphony No. 14

kingsplace.co.uk/voices

Roderick Williams © Benjamin Ealovega

NMC

THE HOME OF NEW MUSIC FROM BRITAIN AND IRELAND
'Always a label worth exploring if you want to keep your finger on the pulse of UK contemporary music.' *BBC Radio 3*

NMC D268 OUT NOW

Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian:
Welcome Party

Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian *voice* • Ziazan *voice* • Trish Clowes *saxophone* • Tim Giles *drums* • Members of the LSO • Jon Hargreaves *conductor* • Ausiàs Garrigós Morant *clarinets* • Choir of Girton College, Cambridge • Gareth Wilson *director*

"The album encompasses acoustic and electronic textures, eastern and western influences and plenty of percussive fun." *BBC Music Magazine*

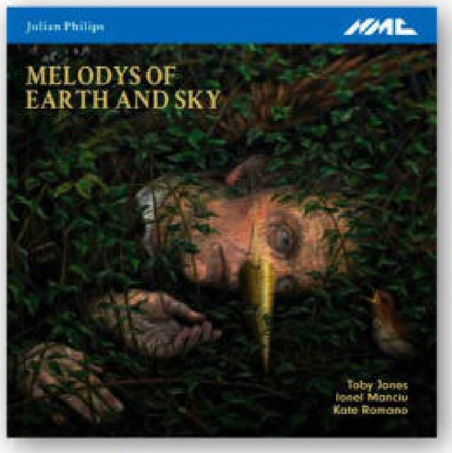
NMC DL3048 OUT NOW

NYCGB:
Young Composers 3

Music by Kristina Arakelyan, Anna Disley-Simpson, Derri Joseph Lewis, & Alex Ho • National Youth Choir of Great Britain • NYCGB Fellowship Ensemble • Ben Parry *director*

"Nine striking new pieces by four rising-star composers," *The Observer*

"Music of gently seering intensity," *BBC Radio 3*



NMC D271 OUT NOW

Julian Philips:
Melodys of Earth and Sky

Music by Julian Philips • Toby Jones *reader* • Ionel Manciu *violin* • Kate Romano *clarinet* • Simon Kövesi *poetry editor & consultant*

BAFTA-winning actor Toby Jones reanimates the 19th-century poet John Clare through his poems and prose, paired with nine creative transcriptions from Clare's book of fiddle tunes – conceived for clarinet and violin by Julian Philips.

NMC D266 27 MAY

Shiva Feshareki:
Turning World

Music by Daphne Oram & Shiva Feshareki • Shiva Feshareki *turntables* • James Bulley *electronics* • London Contemporary Orchestra • Robert Ames *conductor* • BBC Singers • Sofi Jeannin *conductor* • Kit Downes *organ*

A self-described 'sonic architect', Feshareki's intrepid exploration of a 360-degree soundworld dissolves physical, historical, and sonic boundaries.

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Registered Charity no. 328052

www.nmcrec.co.uk

@nmcrecordings

Brief notes

Our selection this month features music sacred, classic and ultra-contemporary

Falla 1915
María Toledo (singer); Bilbao Sinfonietta
IBS Classical IBS232021

The title of the recording refers to the year in which Falla's *El amor brujo* was first staged, in the chamber orchestra version heard here. Though the pared-down forces may lack the usual orchestral lushness, they bring out the work's earthy, folky roots. (JP) ★★★★

Konstantia Gourzi Whispers
Nils Mönkemeyer (viola), William Youn (piano) et al *Sony Classical 19439929102*

Inspired by the natural world, these works were written especially for soloists Mönkemeyer and Youn. It's a luminous and atmospheric project, full of long, sonorous lines and warm tones, and recorded in reverberant surroundings. Guaranteed to take the listener to calm and serene places. (CS) ★★★★

Jeths The Tell-Tale Heart etc
Netherlands Radio Philharmonic et al
Challenge Classics CC72908

There's more than a touch of hysteria about these live recordings of works by Willem Jeths, a composer who describes his music as being 'about extremes'. Based on a story by Edgar Allan Poe, the central work for soprano and orchestra features violent crescendos and percussive clangs. Tasmin Little tackles a similar soundscape in the concerto with gusto. (CS) ★★★

King
Music for Gloucester Cathedral
Gloucester Cathedral Choir/Adrian Partington *SOMM SOMMCD 0649*

Ian King, who died shortly before this recording was made, had a close connection to Gloucester Cathedral. With its chant-like passages and soaring treble lines, his music suits the building's huge acoustic to a tee and is superbly sung here. (JP) ★★★★

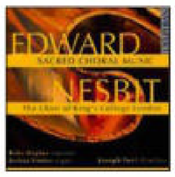
Catherine Lamb Aggregate Forms
JACK Quartet *Kairos KA 10018010*

2020 Ernst Siemens Prize winner Catherine Lamb 'explores harmony via justly tuned intervals' in her music. Without doubt a test of concentration and endurance for the musicians, the works are more an exercise in yogic meditation than traditional rhythm and structure: the quartet play single tones, which gradually oscillate in and out of perfect unison. (CS) ★★★

Mendelssohn
Works for Violin and Piano
Marc Bouchkov (violin), Claire Huangci (piano) et al *Berlin Classics 0302045BC*

This recording features excitingly paced performances from Bouchkov and Huangci – and an equally dazzling Kammerorchester Basel in the Concerto in D minor. The only gripe is the sense of disconnect between orchestra and soloists, the latter of whom seem to have been recorded in an entirely different space. (CS) ★★★

Edward Nesbit Choral Works
The Choir of King's College, London/ Joseph Fort *Delphian DCD34256*



Nesbit's liner notes describe the traces of his 'dual musical heritage', inspired by Anglican choral music from the Tudor era and contemporary music. This album shows this juxtaposition of influences in glittering clarity. (FP) ★★★★

Terry Riley
Autodreamographical Tales
Bang on a Can All-Stars et al
Cantaloupe Music CA21167

These 'dream diary songs' dive into Riley's creative unconscious as he narrates his dreams over music by Bang on a Can. As the subject matter diverges, so too does the style, spanning free jazz, classical and blues. (FP) ★★★★

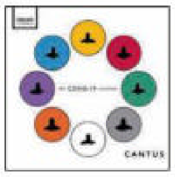
Schubert 31 – Late Piano Works
Fabian Müller (piano)
Berlin Classics 0302672BC

Recorded at the age Schubert was when he composed them – hence the title – Müller looks beyond the maudlin quality so often attributed to these late works. Indeed, he finds the colour in them, with a lightness of touch and a positive disregard for certain tempos. (MB) ★★★★

Leonard Slatkin The Raven etc
Detroit Symphony Orchestra et al
Naxos 8.574352

Narrated by Alec Baldwin, Slatkin's Edgar Allan Poe-setting *The Raven* is the highlight here – eerily unsettling almost throughout, it is nonetheless engaging. As well as Slatkin's own music, there are short historic recordings of Brahms and Korngold by his cellist mother and violinist father. (JP) ★★★

Cantus – The Covid-19 Sessions
Works by Sibelius, Alfvén et al
Cantus *Signum Classics SIGCD819*

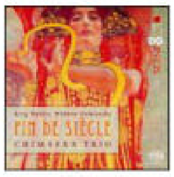


Recorded just before Covid and released as individual tracks during lockdown, the *a cappella* repertoire here ranges from Hildegard von Bingen to Eric Whitacre, folk and spirituals. Cantus are a class act, performing everything with both immaculate balance and plenty of character. (JP) ★★★★

Contemporary Sonatas for Double Bass & Piano by Gubaidulina, Liebermann and Proto
Marek Romanowski (double bass), Hanna Holeska (piano) *DUX DUX1746*

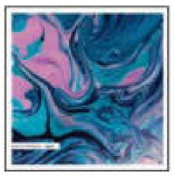
This album of premieres from Romanowski showcases his impressive sound – richly vibrated and cello-like in the top register and veiled and eerie when the music demands it. The three works are fine separately, but grouped together make for too tonally similar a whole. (CS) ★★★

Fin de Siècle Works by Berg, Mahler, Webern and Zemlinsky
Chimaera Trio *MDG MDG9032225*



A wonderfully played programme from turn-of-the-century Vienna combines the rich late-Romanticism of Zemlinsky and Mahler with Berg's distinctly angular Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, which point us in a very different direction. (JP) ★★★★

Gyre Works by Joanna Nicholson, Kerry Hagan, Jonathan Nangle, William Sweeney et al
Joanna Nicholson (clarinet)
TNW Music TNWM07



Clarinettist Joanna Nicholson turns her hand to composition with a work for bass clarinet inspired by a gyre of gannets. This is set against a handful of other contemporary clarinet pieces, showcasing the extremities of the instrument. (FP) ★★★★

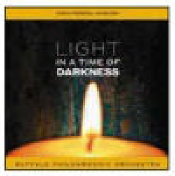
Ice Land – The Eternal Music
Works by Jón Ásgeirsson, Jón Leifs, Anna Thorvaldsdóttir et al
Carolyn Sampson (soprano); Choir of Clare College/Graham Ross et al
Harmonia Mundi HMM905330

An ethereal, escapist set of recordings from the Cambridge choir, bringing together Icelandic choral music from the last half-century. Sævarsson's Requiem forms the centrepiece – a hypnotic, reflective wonder. (FP) ★★★★★

In Transit Works by Sally Greenaway, Augusta Read Thomas et al
Emily Granger (harp) *Avie AV2495*

You'd expect a solo harp album to be somewhat transportive, but harpist Granger goes further in this collection of works by American and Australian composers. Yes it's beautiful, but it also showcases the instrument's versatility and the depths of colour and timbre attainable. (MB) ★★★★

Light in a Time of Darkness **Works by Haydn, Vaughan Williams, G Walker et al**
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra/ JoAnn Falletta
Beau Fleuve 605996998579



I was rather blindsided by the beauty of this set of recordings, captured from Nov 2020–May '21 at the height of the pandemic. The Buffalo musicians seem to pour their hearts into the pieces, with the more contemporary works offering the most riches. Ulysses Kay's *Pietà* is a stunner. (MB) ★★★★★

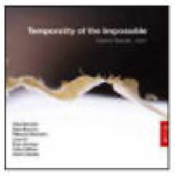
Night Music **Works by Mozart, Schumann, Ravel, Paderewski**
Jan Lisiecki (piano) *DG 486 2069*

From the nursery-like melody of Mozart's *12 Variations* to the mesmerising and evocative *Gaspard de la Nuit* of Ravel, Lisiecki curates a diverse and captivating programme. Typically, his performance is technically astute and totally enveloping for the listener. (MB) ★★★★

Now the Green Blade Riseth **Choral Works by Byrd, Duruflé, Elgar, Ireland, Stainer et al**
The Choir of King's College, Cambridge/ Daniel Hyde *King's College KGS 0065*

A rich offering for Easter courtesy of Cambridge's finest. From Byrd to Bob Chilcott, it may be ambitious in its scope, but it's a beautiful selection and impressive in its delivery. Chilcott's arrangement of the title work really has the spring air beneath its wings. (MB) ★★★★★

Temporality of the Impossible **Works by Rebecca Saunders et al**
Dejana Sekulić (violin) *Huddersfield Contemporary Records HCR26CD*



There are seven contemporary solo violin works here, including a new work by Dario Buccino. In all offerings, the violin is raw, exposed and pushed to its limit, with extended techniques and experimental soundworlds. (FP) ★★★

Reviewers: *Michael Beek* **(MB)**, *Freya Parr* **(FP)**, *Jeremy Pound* **(JP)**, *Charlotte Smith* **(CS)**

GETTY

The month in box-sets

A bounty of Bach: Philippe Herreweghe presides over the Collegium Vocale Gent

Celebrating two great string virtuosos

This month's round-up also sees Bach and women composers on piano

The Grand Piano label has been at the forefront of showcasing the music of women composers, thanks to a series of acclaimed recordings. ***Three Centuries of Female Composers*** *(Grand Piano GP897X)* is a ten-disc collection bringing together recent releases of works by largely unfamiliar names. Seven pianists preside over the selection, including Nicolas Horvath on four discs and composer Tanya Ekanayaka playing her own works.

Johanna Martzy – Her Columbia Graphophone Recordings *(Warner Classics 9029648857)* celebrates a brief period of recording by the acclaimed Hungarian violinist. Though she largely recorded for Deutsche Grammophon post-World War II, she stepped into the studio for Columbia in 1954 and '55, producing this selection of recordings. Martzy's legacy is relatively little known outside collector circles, so it's great to have these nine discs. She was the first woman to record the Bach Sonatas and Partitas; some of those feature here, alongside works by Brahms, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Mozart.

Martzy's legacy is relatively little known outside collector circles

Heinrich Schiff was a cellist in a class of his own who loomed large on stage and record. In the ***Complete Recordings on Philips and Deutsche Grammophon*** *(Decca 485 1899)* we are treated to a limited-edition set of 21 discs that showcase Schiff's virtuosity and diversity. Haydn and Schubert sit alongside a Gulda concerto (written for Schiff) and a Lutosławski concerto conducted by the composer, while Maxim Shostakovich conducts Schiff in his father's pair of concertos. There's plenty more to savour, from Vivaldi and Brahms to two recordings of the Dvořák Concerto.

Philippe Herreweghe has enjoyed a long association with the music of JS Bach, and in ***Bach*** *(Phi LPH038)*, you can reacquaint yourself with some nine hours of recordings by his Collegium Vocale Gent. The ten discs were originally released singly from 2011-20, and they take in motets, the Leipzig Cantatas, the *St John Passion* and the Mass in B minor. It's a real bounty of Bach brilliance, performed by some of the very best in the business.

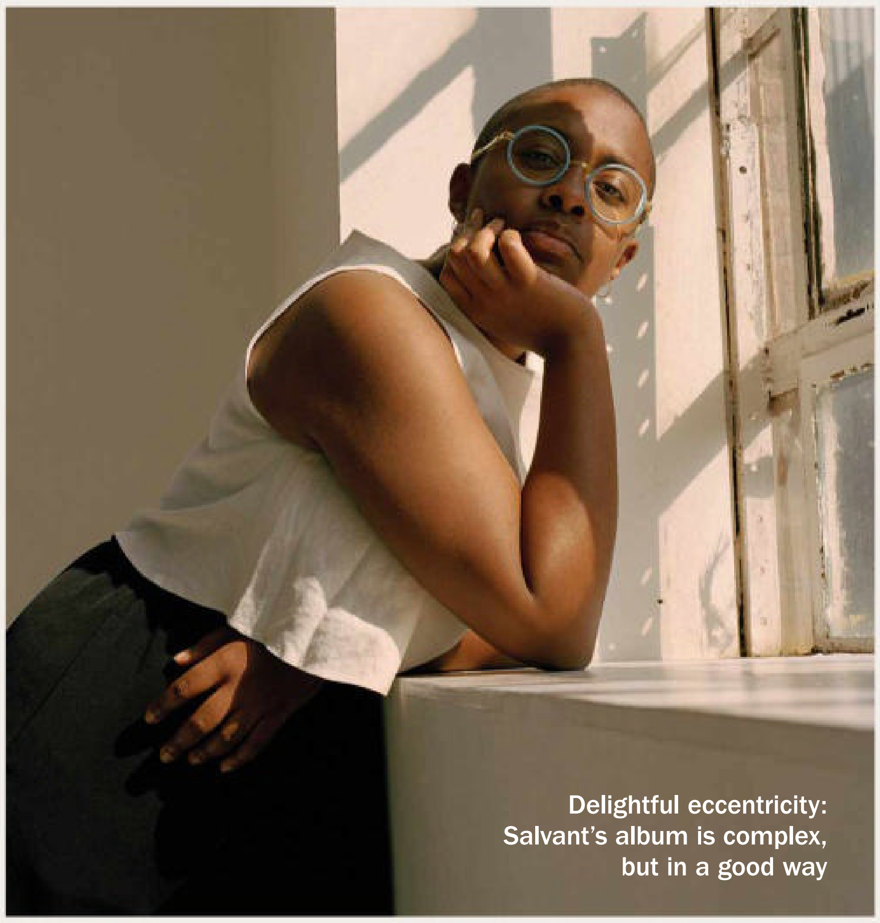
Jazz

Roger Thomas enjoys an embarrassment of riches, each with a unique approach

JAZZ CHOICE

Rewriting the rulebook

Cécile McLorin Salvant's *Ghost Song* goes its own way with extraordinary eclecticism



Delightful eccentricity: Salvant's album is complex, but in a good way

Cécile McLorin Salvant

Ghost Song

Cécile McLorin Salvant (voice, piano), Paul Sikivie (electric and acoustic bass, synth) et al

Nonesuch 75597914672

It's always a good sign when an album demands such an all-encompassing review that it's hard to know where to begin. When interviewed in these pages not long ago, Salvant was cheerfully anticipating her Nonesuch debut, alluding to its eclectic nature as a manifestation of her inner eccentricity with a mixture of delight and something akin to self-revelation tempered with mystery. Yes, it really is as complex at that, but in a very good way: you don't argue with someone who mixes originals with Kate Bush and Gregory Porter covers (for example) on an album that also largely chucks conventional jazz instrumentation out of the window while nevertheless rehabilitating the banjo. This set features everything from theatrical and folk elements to the kind of rapid-fire *Sprechstimme* pithiness associated with Garfunkel and Oates (search YouTube), yet its overall themes – relationships, love, loss, how we deal with their attendant emotional states – are handled with clarity and conviction. An extraordinary piece of work. ★★★★★

This is one of those months when every release selected really deserves the 'Jazz Choice' slot, a proposition that becomes even more interesting given that one contender is actually a reggae album, but bear with me here.

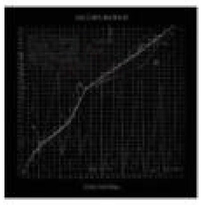
Cleveland Watkiss is a man of many parts, one of which is that of a phenomenal jazz singer, but here he presents music grown from alternative roots. ***The Great Jamaican Songbook Vol. 1*** offers a set of classic tunes that draws on the work of a who's who of reggae legends, ranging from Gregory Isaacs to King Tubby and Lee 'Scratch' Perry, but jazz listeners will be drawn in by the arrangements and vocal delivery, both of which connect the source material to a clearly-defined jazz sensibility (you'll know it when you hear it). The implication that there's more to come is heartening and the singer's label name is the best ever. *(Cdubya CDUB1)* ★★★★★

'Cdubya's' many and varied associates include the fine pianist ***Robert Mitchell***, whose inspired duo with cellist ***Shirley Smart*** has resulted in ***Zeitgeist2*** (sic). The album probably counts as chamber jazz of a sort, although it manages to be both profound and gently witty on its own terms, too. Mitchell's precise, crisp playing provides an ideal contrast to Smart's lyrical and occasionally yearning cello lines, although the duo isn't afraid to have fun with a boogie riff here and a walking bassline there. A fine example of interplay between two very articulate musicians that comes highly recommended, as does the Discus label in general with its impressive catalogue of fearless leftfieldery. *(Discus 116CD)* ★★★★★

12 Stars (a title inspired by tarot) marks the signing to Blue Note of Chilean saxophonist and founder member of the much-lauded Artemis collective ***Melissa Aldana***. This album sees her fronting her current quintet and tends toward personal and general introspection, reflecting as it does the events of the past couple of years. Aldana never confuses introspection with introversion, however, gliding with natural ease from warm intimacy to a fluidity that traverses bebop-to-free with confidence. Her empathetic band (essentially a perfectly elastic four-piece rhythm section, which suits her approach well) knows exactly where she's coming from. *(Blue Note B003459602)* ★★★★★

Back to Back from ***Zaitz & Kavuma*** is an interesting instrumental switch for both Artie (usually guitar, here on organ) and Mark (trumpet, here on piano) respectively. It's a joy to be reminded just how well these two instruments work together, as apart from both being keyboard instruments they are of course entirely unlike each other (and Kavuma also picks up a horn occasionally to add a little seasoning). This music is all about mutual engagement and the two protagonists tackle the project with obvious relish. Utterly excellent stuff. *(Banger Factory BF003)* ★★★★★

Last but by no means least, ***Jacob's Ladder*** sees ***Brad Mehldau*** going into fusion mode, which contrasts nicely with his recent solo and orchestral offerings. As with the artists mentioned above he also embraces multi-instrumentalism here, deploying a range of electronic keyboards alongside his piano in a celebration of the progressive rock that informed his early years. It's a spirited and lively undertaking, involving collaborators that include this month's Jazz Choice artist. *(Nonesuch 75597913460)* ★★★★★



TAKE FIVE

An interview with today's finest jazz musicians

Unusual line-up: Rahman's Cheltenham set includes flute and flugelhorn

This month: Zoe Rahman

'I'm really looking forward to Cheltenham!' says Zoe Rahman, cutting to the chase. It's a helpful opener, given that her career as a pianist and composer lends itself to an impossibly wide-ranging conversation. An alumna of the Royal Academy of Music and Oxford University and the recipient of a Berklee scholarship that saw her studying under Joanne Brackeen, her inventiveness conveys her sophisticated musical thinking. Her achievements include Ivor Novello and MOBO Awards, a Mercury nomination, performances worldwide and an expanding discography.

The Cheltenham Jazz Festival has previously welcomed her in a piano duo with Nikki Yeoh, but her forthcoming appearance (on 29 April) is in a very different context. 'I'm bringing a quintet with

> **Rahman's inventiveness conveys her sophisticated musical thinking**

a slightly unusual line-up,' she says. That's true enough, given that the band's front line comprises flute and trumpet/flugelhorn, handled by Rowland Sutherland and Byron Wallen. 'There'll be some alto flute as well,' she adds, 'which together with the flugelhorn will extend the range a bit.'

It's an idea that perhaps seems less surprising in the light of Rahman's interest in varied arrangements of her material, whether her own or by others. She cites Mark Armstrong as an example of the latter: 'I'd worked with him before in the Clark Tracey Quintet and he arranged one of my tunes a while ago for NYJO (National Youth Jazz Orchestra).' Of her own recent work in this area, she says, 'I'm going to be doing a new album and I've been writing some new material which I've been playing with my trio on the few gigs we've been having during the pandemic. Some of the tunes lend themselves to a larger band, so I've done arrangements of them for, for example, a performance at the Royal Academy involving four horns.'

There's much more that could be said about her other projects, past and future, but in the meantime her Cheltenham quintet will make for an interesting and unusual halfway-house between her trio and her outings with larger ensembles. ***Roger Thomas***

GETTY

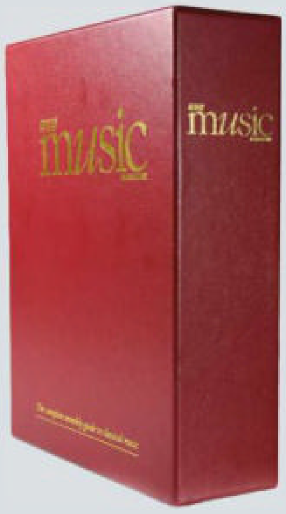
BACK ISSUES

TURN TO PAGE 10 TO SEE OUR LATEST SUBSCRIPTION OFFER!

FEBRUARY 2022
We explore the life and work of the great violinist Jascha Heifetz; plus we celebrate Scriabin's 150th on our solo piano cover CD

MARCH 2022
Star tenor Nicky Spence talks to us about his wide-ranging career; plus we go on a walk in the Cotswolds guided by the music of Holst

APRIL 2022
Pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim looks back ahead of his 80th birthday; plus we explore the recent sea shanty phenomenon



SUBSCRIBERS – EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT JUST FOR YOU!

- Subscribers benefit from the discounted pricing below.
- Simply log into your account on **www.buysubscriptions.com**, visit 'merchandise' and select the *BBC Music Magazine* slipcase.
- The *BBC Music Magazine* slipcase is perfect for storing your magazine. Each slipcase can hold up to a year's worth of magazines!

BACK ISSUE PRICES

SUBSCRIBERS
- UK – £6.99
- Europe – £7.99
- Rest of world – £8.99

NON-SUBSCRIBERS
- UK – £7.99
- Europe – £8.99
- Rest of world – £9.99

SLIPCASE PRICES

SUBSCRIBERS
- UK – £8.49
- Europe – £9.49
- Rest of world – £10.99

NON-SUBSCRIBERS
- UK – £9.49
- Europe – £10.49
- Rest of world – £11.99

ORDER NOW

www.buysubscriptions.com/musicbackissues

Or call: **03330 162 110†** and quote **MUMERCH**

†Calls from landlines will cost up to 9p per minute. Call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute but are included in free call packages. Lines are open 9.00am-5.00pm Mon-Fri. Overseas readers please call (+44) 01604 973 726

17–20 May 2022

HANNOVER
Germany

Classical :NEXT
10 YEARS

THE GLOBAL GATHERING FOR
ALL ART MUSIC PROFESSIONALS
Expo / Conference / Showcase Festival
Networking / Innovation Award
Online Community

Design: Ta-Trung, Berlin

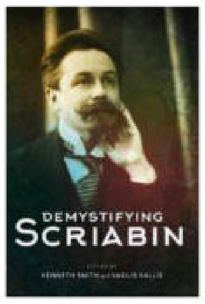
REGISTER NOW
CLASSICALNEXT.COM

Books

Our critics cast their eyes over this month's selection of books on classical music

Demystifying Scriabin
Ed. Vasilis Kallis & Kenneth Smith
Boydell Press 358pp (hb) £75

This is a fairly excellent compendium of the latest scholarship on this extraordinary composer, so long as you modify any expectations set up by its title. With

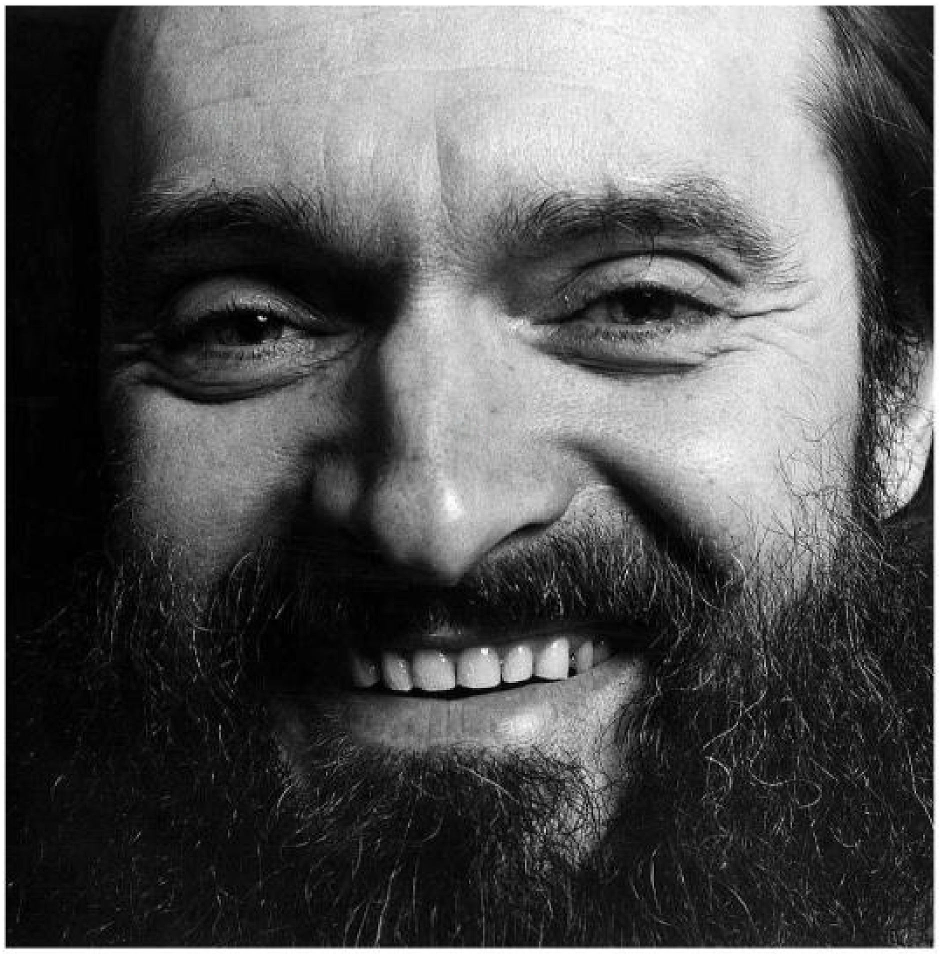


so many points of view presented by scholars from Russia, America and across Europe, there's no single concordant narrative – yet between them, they offer plenty of concrete and revealing evidence that certainly clarifies what Scriabin was 'about'. Just to mention a few of its plums: Marina Frolova-Walker gives a detailed, typically lucid account of what Scriabin's piano playing was like, and how this – and his music (as further speculated upon by Inessa Bazayev) – was influenced by his hand injury; Anna Gawboy's chapter on Scriabin's synaesthesia, which he consciously nurtured in accordance with theosophical writings, explains how his ability to 'see' key centres (not merely pitches) may have facilitated his creation of new harmonies and musical structures; and Konstantin Zenkin writing on the unpromising subject of music textbooks unexpectedly illuminates the musical genius of Scriabin's much vilified composition teacher Anton Arensky. In all, a book warmly recommended to anyone seriously interested in Scriabin and his work. *Daniel Jaffé* ★★★★

Hidden Man – My Many Musical Lives
John Altman
Equinox 290pp (hb) £45.00

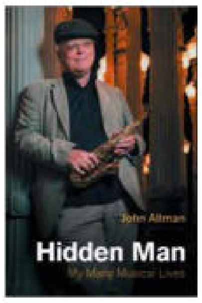
You get the feeling that John Altman can't believe his luck. As a session player, saxophonist, arranger, producer, bandleader, conductor and film composer, the British musician has had (and is still enjoying) quite the career. But you'd be forgiven for not having ever heard of him – hence the book's title. You also get the feeling that this veritable musical polymath has been bursting to share

GETTY



Discotheque discovery: Arvo Pärt found his audience away from the concert hall

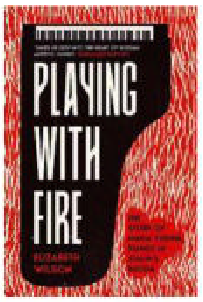
these stories of celebrity encounters and no small amount of hard work – such is the life of a jobbing



musician. He begins by telling of the time he was accused of being a flagrant 'name dropper', yet it would be hard for Altman to share his story without including the who's who of music and pop culture royalty who have played their own part in his career. From George Harrison and Van Morrison to Björk and Monty Python, it's a gallery of stars, not to mention a breathless (and sometimes exhausting) recollection of late-night jam sessions, number one hits and a memorable life in music. *Michael Beek* ★★★

Playing with Fire – The Story of Maria Yudina, Pianist in Stalin's Russia
Elizabeth Wilson
Yale 352pp (hb) £25

The firebrand Russian pianist Maria Yudina is perhaps best known in the West for two things that almost certainly aren't true. As Elizabeth Wilson's absorbing new biography sets straight, it is in fact highly unlikely that Yudina recorded Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23 overnight at the behest of panicked Soviet officials, after Stalin purportedly heard her live (unrecorded) performance on the radio, then demanded a recording.



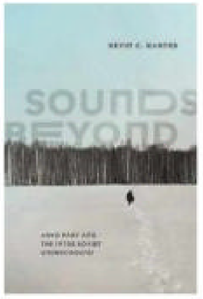
Nor did Yudina secretly receive the Stalin Prize then donate the prize money to the Russian Orthodox Church, entreating them to pray for Stalin's sins. Wilson has no need of apocryphal tidbits to hold our interest. Rather, the book is fuelled by meticulous research, lively writing and a clearsighted respect for its gifted subject.

Yudina's steadfast Christianity and advocacy for contemporary music meant she was often at odds with the Russian establishment. Wilson's richly-textured study traces the rise and fall of Yudina's star against the backdrop of the Soviet regime, drawing extensively on the pianist's own spirited correspondence throughout. Written with clarity and grace, *Playing with Fire* is a fascinating exploration of a life that brims (in Yudina's words) with 'diversity, refinement [and] virtuosity'. *Kate Wakeling* ★★★★★

Sounds Beyond – Arvo Pärt and the 1970s Soviet Underground
Kevin C Karnes
Chicago 224pp (hb) £28

Where did Arvo Pärt come from? As Kevin C Karnes observes, he 'is still widely regarded as an isolated, solitary figure, who appeared out of nowhere in 1980s Berlin, his crystalline musical language already fully formed.' In fact, as is rapidly apparent from this book, *Sounds Beyond*, the composer's aesthetic emerged from a surprisingly vibrant culture of artistic interaction and experimentation.

Operating within the bureaucratic cracks of totalitarian oversight, extraordinary figures – such as Hardijs Lediņš, Alexei Lubimov, Andres Mustonen and



Gidon Kremer – enabled the public sharing of artworks that fell outside of the prescribed boundaries of Soviet ideology. Avant-garde music was heard and discussed in 'discotheques' rather than concert halls. Most radical of all within a belligerently atheist state were the performances of explicitly devotional works by Pärt and Vladimir Martynov.

Documenting such unofficial activities is like catching fog, some repetitions arising from viewing key events from multiple perspectives. They are a minor caveat, though, in a wonderfully nuanced piece of scholarship from Karnes, which reveals this disparate underground community's remarkable story of collective endeavour. *Christopher Dingle* ★★★★

Audio choice

Chris Haslam chooses the best hi-fi equipment for your classical music listening

THIS MONTH: BARGAIN BLUETOOTH HEADPHONES AND EARBUDS

Audio first: but Final also includes the latest features

BBC music MAGAZINE BEST BUY

BEST IN TEST

Final UX3000 £119

The price tag may appear steep for headphones, but for all the latest features – great battery, Active Noise Cancellation (ANC), Bluetooth 5.0 wireless connectivity and decent sound quality – you're going to have to invest a little. This pair from Japanese high-end audio brand Final ticks all the budget boxes. Final makes some fantastic top-end headphones – the £3,999 D8000 Pro had me remortgaging – and while these don't compare, they do boast a considered performance and soundstage that could only come from a brand that puts audio first.

ANC often sullies sound quality, but Final has developed a new driver specifically tuned to cope with the added technology in our ears, and the result puts other budget headphones – and even some premium headphones – to shame. While the ANC is extremely effective at blocking unwanted noise, the Bluetooth 5.0 aptX offers the possibility of almost CD-quality streaming, and they boast a battery life of up to 35 hours. £119 doesn't buy you all the features: there's no auto-pausing if you remove them, on-ear controls are minimal and the buttons and casing are a little plasticky, although the soft-textured, fingerprint-proof coating is a nice touch, and they fold small for easy storage. **snext-final.com**

Smart design: a lot is packed into JLab's budget buds

CHEAP AND CHEERFUL

JLab GO Air POP £19.99

I had no high expectations for these £20 true wireless earbuds, but after a few hours' wear I was surprised by how decent they were. They have an eight-hour battery life per tiny 3.7g earbud, with a total of 32 hours from the pocket-friendly battery pack. The whole bundle weighs 35.4g, including a built-in USB charge cable – a godsend to anyone prone to misplacing their chargers. Bluetooth 5.1 offers a stable wireless connection, and while the 6mm drivers aren't going to offer revelatory insights into a favourite concerto, given their thoughtful design it would be churlish to overly criticise them at this price. **jlab.com**

IMPRESSIVE EARBUDS

Nothing Ear (1) £99

If the excellent Apple AirPod Pros are beyond your budget, the Ear (1) is very passable for half the price. Available in transparent white or a more understated black, they have superb Active Noise Cancellation, five hours of continuous listening (34 hours with the battery case), wireless charging, a comfortable fit (second only to AirPod Pro), instant connectivity and a genuinely enjoyable performance, with controlled bass and great detail. **nothing.tech**

NEED TO KNOW

Which features? Sound quality, comfort (a good fit is crucial) and durability are most important when choosing headphones, but these are often overlooked in favour of hi-tech gizmos including wireless connectivity, voice control and ANC. The more features you opt for, the less emphasis there will be on sound quality, so think about what's most important.

How much should I spend? You do get what you pay for – especially sound quality – so spend at least £50 for basic headband-style Bluetooth headphones and £70-120 if you have to have Active Noise Cancelling (ANC).

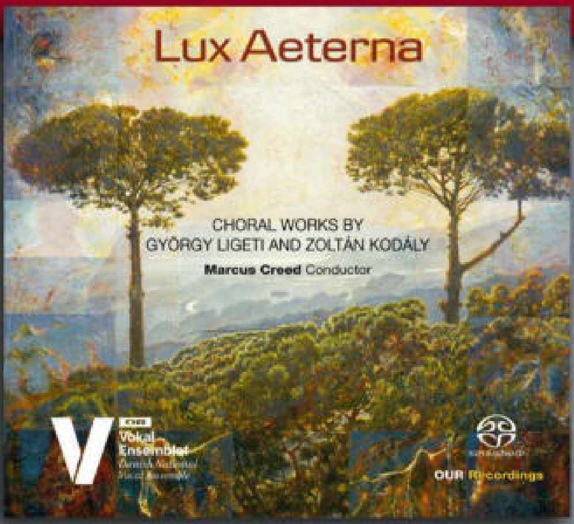
Does Bluetooth sound good? Older headphones with Bluetooth V4.2 were convenient but often sounded poor. The latest V5 Bluetooth is twice as fast with four times the range, and can transfer eight times as much data. This means more audio data can be transferred so your music sounds better.

Reviews Index

JS Bach Concertos after L'estro Armonico by Antonio Vivaldi 113
Sinfonias 122
Solo Violin Partitas Nos 2 & 3 125
Solo Violin Sonata No. 2 125
St Matthew Passion 118
Trio Sonata No. 3 122
Two-Part Inventions etc 122
Bargiel Piano Trios Nos 1 & 2 123
Beethoven
Piano Concerto in E flat 113
Piano Concerto No. 5 113
Piano Sonatas Nos 14, 17 & 23 125
Violin Sonatas, Opp. 12, 24 & 96 113
Brahms String Sextets Nos 1 & 2 123
Bruckner Symphony No. 2 110
Coleridge-Taylor
Hiawatha's Wedding Feast 128
Symphony in A 128
Debussy
La boîte à jouxjoux (arr. orch) 110
Children's Corner (arr. orch) 110
Petite Suite (arr. orch) 110
Donizetti
Anna Bolena; Maria Stuarda; Roberto Devereux – excerpts 116
Falla El amor brujo etc 130
Giordano Siberia 117
Konstantia Gourzi Whispers 130
Grieg
Peer Gynt (arr. violin & orch.) 113
Sofia Gubaidulina
Orchestral Works 128
Haydn Symphony No. 49 119
Jeths The Tell-Tale Heart etc 130
Jolivet
Trumpet Concertino 114
King
Music for Gloucester Cathedral 130
Kubik Divertimentos Nos 1 & 2 110
Gerald McBoing Boing 110
Symphony Concertante 110
Lalande Dies Irae 118
Grands Motets 118
Miserere 118
Veni Creator 118
Catherine Lamb
Aggregate Forms 130
Leclair
Violin Concerto in A minor 114
Locatelli L'Arte del Violino, Op. 3 – Concerto No. 8 114
Maconchy Faustus 119
Love Stood at My Door etc 119
Stuart MacRae Chamber Works 123
Mendelssohn Capriccio Brillant 114
Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 2 114
Works for Violin and Piano 130
Moeran Piano Trio in D 123
Prelude for Cello and Piano 123
Sonata for Two Violins 123
Violin Sonata in E minor 123
Mozart Flute Quartets Nos 1-4 124
Piano Sonatas Nos 3, 13 & 15 125
Edward Nesbit Choral Works 130
Nielsen Violin Concerto 115
Pergolesi Stabat Mater 119
Rachmaninov
Do Not Sing, My Beauty 114
Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 119
Ravel Orchestral Works 111
Terry Riley
Autodreamographical Tales 130
Roussel
Le testament de la Tante Caroline 117
Santoro Symphonies Nos 5 & 7 112
Schubert Fierrabras – Overture 112
Late Piano Works 130
Piano Sonatas, D664, D769a & D894 126
Symphony in E, D729 112
Shostakovich
Piano Concerto No. 1 114
Sibelius Symphonies 108
Tapiola 108
Violin Concerto 115
Leonard Slatkin The Raven etc 130
Vaughan Williams Four Hymns 118
The House of Life 118
On Wenlock Edge etc 118
Sacred Choral Works 120
Songs of Travel etc 119
Symphony No. 5 etc (trans. violin and organ) 126
Vivaldi L'estro Armonico, Op. 3 113
Stabat Mater 120
Violin Concertos in B minor & C 114
Weinberg Cello Concertino 115
Chamber Symphony No. 4 115
Fantasy for Cello & Orchestra 115
Trumpet Concerto 114

COLLECTIONS
An Old Belief The Sixteen 120
Cantus – The Covid-19 Sessions Cantus 130
Caprices Fenella Humphreys 126
Cello Masterworks Daniil Shafran 128
Contemporary Sonatas for Double Bass & Piano Marek Romanowski, Hanna Holeska 130
Eastertide Evensong Choir of St John's College, Cambridge 120
Encores Daniel Barenboim 126
Fin de Siècle Chimaera Trio 130
From Italy to Persia Aryan Gheitasi, Souroush Sadeghi 124
Gyre Joanna Nicholson 130
Haydn • Mozart • Beethoven American Art Quartet 128
Kathleen Ferrier sings Bach & Handel Kathleen Ferrier 128
Ice Land – The Eternal Music Choir of Clare College, Oxford 130
In Transit Emily Granger 130
Lennox in Paris Emmanuel Bach, Jenny Stern 124
Light in a Time of Darkness Buffalo Philharmonic 131
Lux Aeterna Danish Nat'l Vocal Ensemble 120
Made for Opera Nadine Sierra 117
My Life in Music Ruth Slenczynska 127
A Night in London Ophélie Gaillard et al 115
Night Music Jan Lisiecki 131
Now the Green Blade Riseth Choir of King's College, Cambridge 131
O Jerusalem! Apollo's Fire 120
Pene Pati Pene Pati 116
Psappha Unconducted Psappha 128
Rhapsody Martin James Bartlett 115
Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes Various Arists 111
Soundscapes Tosca Opdam, Alexander Ullman 124
Temporality of Impossible Dejana Sekulić 131
Undersong Simone Dinnerstein 127
Variations Simon Trpčeski 127

3 NEW EXCEPTIONAL RELEASES from OUR Recordings
Recorded by producer Preben Iwan in the DXD format



SACD Release March 2022 · Cat No: 6.220676
Join the journey with the Danish National Vocal Ensemble conducted by Marcus Creed, on their 3rd album of 20th century European choral masterpieces.

SACD Release May 2022 · Cat No: 6.220679
"We walk, the birds fly - we wage war, they sing".
Olivier Messiaen
The 4 solo players from The Danish National Symphony Orchestra takes us deeply inside Messiaen's masterwork from 1941. In the booklet you can exclusively read the Danish writer Jens Christian Grøndahl essay for each movement.

Digital EP Release May 2022 · Cat No: 9.70896
WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING
Super-abundant high spirits alternate with pained, almost expressionistic lyricism; simplicity and directness with astringent irony. Harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, Århus Symphony Orchestra and Leif Segerstam brings strongly all the nuances to life in Poul Ruder's amazing new harpsichord concerto.

OUR Recordings
www.ourrecordings.com
WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION: www.naxos.com

Live choice

Paul Riley picks the month's best concert and opera highlights in the UK

A fine spectacle: Angela Gheorghiu sings Verdi in Oxford

Royal Northern Sinfonia
Newcastle, 2 May
Web: *sagegateshead.com*
Pianist Alasdair Beatson teams up with members of the orchestra for a Viennese chamber music trail taking in three city churches and ten works. Architecture from medieval to newly restored Georgian resounds to an eclectic selection ranging from early Haydn to Schoenberg's arrangement of Strauss's *Emperor Waltz*. Works, too, by Chevalier de Saint-Georges and Johanna Doderer.

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, 4 May
Web: *bcmg.org.uk*
At the end of May, a day-long Xenakis 100th-birthday celebration beckons. Kicking off the month, however, composers closely identified with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group are fêted: Knussen, Carter and Harrison Birtwistle. Also included are Charlotte Bray's *Trial of light* and Birtwistle's arrangements of Machaut.

English Concert
St Martin's-in-the-Fields, London, 5 May
Web: *stmartin-in-the-fields.org*
Under Harry Bicket Handel opera and the English Concert have become a bit of an item. Over summer, they're in residence at Garsington Opera with *Amadigi*; and by way of a warm-up they tackle *Serse* in a concert performance that features Emily D'Angelo at the head of a cast including Lucy Crowe, Mary Bevan and Neil Davies.

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
City Halls, Glasgow, 5 May
Web: *glasgowconcerthalls.com*
Chief conductor designate Ryan Wigglesworth takes up the BBC SSO reins in September and bides his time here with a spot of multi-tasking. Directing Mozart's A major Piano Concerto K414 from the keyboard, he juxtaposes it with Sibelius's Symphony No. 4 and premieres a new work by Jörg Widmann.

Oxford Philharmonic
Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, 5, 19 May
Web: *oxfordphil.com*
An operatic month lies ahead for Marios Papadopoulos's orchestra. First up is bass-baritone Bryn Terfel who, in a programme that also includes Richard Strauss's Oboe Concerto, dips into Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* and *Die Walküre*. On the 19th, soprano Angela Gheorghiu sings Verdi, with excerpts from the Italian's *Don Carlo* and *Otello*.

Scottish Chamber Orchestra & Chorus
Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 May
Web: *sco.org.uk*
'A Very British Adventure' is the title of conductor Andrew Manze's programme, bookended by Grace Williams's *Sea Sketches* and Vaughan Williams's *Flos Campi*. Manze's arrangement of Dowland neatly complements Britten's viola-spotlighting *Lachrymae*, and the concert also introduces Anna Clyne's new choral work, *The Years*. Timothy Ridout is the viola soloist.

Doric String Quartet
Wigmore Hall, London, 7,14 May
Web: *wigmore-hall.org.uk*
Hot on the heels of the Emerson Quartet's Shostakovich cycle on the Southbank, the Dorics are in a similarly completist mood. Across two concerts, they perform the six genre-expanding quartets Bartók composed over a period of some 30 years.

The Strauss Project
Barbican and Royal Festival Hall, London, 9-13 May
Web: *barbican.org.uk*
A river runs through conductor Andris Nelsons's Strauss Project, which opens with his Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra at the Barbican. Two concerts corral assorted tone poems plus pianist Yuja Wang in the *Burleske*, before Nelsons's 'other' orchestra, the Boston Symphony, takes to the Festival Hall stage for a further two instalments including the *Alpine Symphony* and soprano Lise Davidsen in the *Four Last Songs*.

English Touring Opera
Gala Theatre, Durham, 10 May
Web: *englishtouringopera.org.uk*
Rimsky-Korsakov's final opera is a bold choice with which to introduce new music director Gerry Cornelius. Based on Pushkin, *The Golden Cockerel* takes a satirical swipe at the shortcomings of the Romanovs and is directed by James Conway. Grant Doyle is the wrong-footed Emperor.

Llŷr Williams
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff, 12 May
Web: *rwcmd.ac.uk*
The RWCMD's artist-in-association reaches the penultimate chapter of his two-year traversal of Chopin's piano music. En route to the mighty B minor Sonata, Llŷr Williams plays the last of the four Ballades as well as the Scherzo No. 4.

Royal Opera
Linbury Theatre, London, 12-22 May
Web: *roh.org.uk*
Celebrating two decades of the Jette Parker Young Artists

programme, director Anthony Almeida and conductor Michael Papadopoulos join forces for an enterprising double bill. The centenary of Stravinsky's *Mavra* is marked alongside *Pierrot lunaire*, Schoenberg's ground-breaking melodrama from ten years earlier.

Ulster Orchestra
Ulster Hall, Belfast, 13 May
Web: *ulsterorchestra.org.uk*
Chief conductor Daniele Rustioni's 'Postcard from Italy' proposes a snapshot of the 'generazione dell'Ottanta', a clutch of Italian composers born around 1880. Respighi's *Fountains of Rome* spearheads less familiar fare by Malipiero and Pizzetti, while organist Martin Riccabona is the soloist for Casella's *Concerto Romano*.

Colourscape Collective
St Mary's Church, Wendover, 17 May
Web: *chilternarts.com*
Chiltern Arts' moveable feast welcomes guitarist Sean Shibe to Berkhamsted and the City of London Sinfonia to Marlow. In keeping with the otherworldly theme, the Colourscape Collective offers an unexpected slant on Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, reimagined for chamber quintet and no singers!

Academy of Ancient Music
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge, 18 May
Web: *aam.co.uk*
Turkey is the next stop on the Academy's 'New Worlds' itinerary – at any rate, as seen through the prism of the French Court. Works by Delalande and Campra compound the Turkish delight of Lully's *La cérémonie des Turcs* and music from Rameau's *Les Indes galantes*.

Chineke!
St George's, Bristol, 20 May
Web: *stgeorgesbristol.co.uk*
Cuba meets Nigeria and Scotland, as Odaline de la Martinez conducts Jill Jarman's new concerto for double bass and percussion. Dvořák's Serenade for Strings sets a scene comprising James B Wilson's *Free-man* and Sowande's *African Suite*. (See 'Backstage with…', right)

I Fagiolini
Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden, 21 May
Web: *saffronhall.com*
'Rewilding The Waste Land' takes TS Eliot's poem as the starting point for a meditation anchored by Eliot's text and Victoria's *Tenebrae Responsories*. World premieres of works by Joanna Marsh and Shruthi Rajasekar rub shoulders with Byrd and Vaughan Williams.

Orchestra of Welsh National Opera
St David's Hall, Cardiff, 22 May
Web: *stdavidshallcardiff.co.uk*
Tomáš Hanus and his orchestra performed Smetana's *Šárka* from *Má Vlast* earlier in the season, and return to the epic cycle with *From Bohemia's Woods and Fields*. Steven Osborne is the soloist in the Piano Concerto No. 2 that Shostakovich wrote for his son Maxim, before Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony signals heroic defiance.

Royal Scottish National Orchestra
Music Hall, Aberdeen, 26 May
Web: *rsno.org.uk*
Performed by Nicola Benedetti (who gave last year's premiere), Mark Simpson's pandemic-tinged Violin Concerto is bookended by Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and *La nuit et l'amour*, a work by the French composer's contemporary, Augusta Holmès. Fabien Gabel conducts.

Ensemble Molière
Toll Gavel United Church, Beverley, 28 May
Web: *ensemblemoliere.com*
Radio 3's first ever New Generation Baroque Ensemble shadows the daily routine of the Sun King Louis XIV. The Ouverture from Charpentier's *Les arts florissants* serves as an alarm call, with Lully's *Phaëton* saluting sunrise. Couperin accompanies the day's work before Delalande's *Symphonie pour les soupers du Roy* sounds the dinner gong. Marais's *Trios pour le coucher du Roy* tucks us in for the night.

Hallé Orchestra
Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, 28 May
Web: *bridgewater-hall.co.uk*
Opera in concert has become something of an end-of-season Hallé tradition, and Mark Elder's choice this year is one of his favourites: Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. The young Japanese soprano Eri Nakamura (see p22) takes the title role, with Thomas Atkins as Pinkerton.

BACKSTAGE WITH…
Conductor Odaline de la Martinez

It's good to talk: 'You get a continual conversation between the double bass and percussion'

MALCOLM CROWTHER

Your concert with Chineke! in Bristol on 20 May includes a new concerto for percussion and double bass, played by Evelyn Glennie and Chi-chi Nwanoku. Tell us more…
The concerto is called *Across the Divide* and has African influences. Chi-chi told Jill Jarman, the composer, about when her father took her to Nigeria and she heard how they used drums to communicate between different villages – her father could tell her what those drums were saying. So in the first movement, 'Igboba', you get a continual conversation between the double bass and the percussion, and the orchestra picks up the idea. The second movement, 'Exchange', explores the experience of being lovers – how it affects our mind and bodies, regardless of what culture we come from. And the final movement, 'Dance', is a celebration that has a section that borrows from a flamenco rhythm.

Does the percussionist solely play drums?
No! There are a lot of instruments, including a frame drum, gong, marimba, suspended cymbal, woodblock, jam block, hi-hat, snare drum and bass drum. Evelyn will also be using a superball mallet on the gong and the marimba. We'll begin with it, as it takes such a long time to get everything on the stage!

Among the other works in the programme, James B Wilson's *Free-man* has a Bristolian link, doesn't it?
Free-man is inspired by the Bristol bus boycott of 1963 and the boycott's leader Paul Stephenson, who was later made a Freeman of the city. It opens with a solitary voice in the flute and, colouring the background, what Wilson calls an 'urgent tremolo' in the strings. There is a sense of struggle, but by the end it has a sense of joy. The work can be enjoyed in its own right, but there is also that story behind it.

Fela Sowande's *African Suite* and Dvořák's Serenade, meanwhile, are altogether better known…
Yes! Sowande, who was Nigerian, wrote his *African Suite* in 1952 and it's been recorded by Decca, among others. It's very beautiful. However, a lot of people who perform such music often try to find the western European element in it – with Sowande, it is important to bring out the African tradition. As for the Dvořák, it's a wonderful piece for strings and there is nothing it doesn't have – it's full of all kinds of emotions, which I think the audience will appreciate!

TV&Radio

Your comprehensive guide to what's on BBC Radio 3 this month

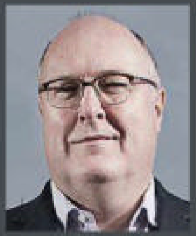
A sustained tradition: Anoushka Shankar presents a new series on Indian classical music

BBC RADIO 3 90–93FM

MAY'S RADIO 3 LISTINGS

Schedules may be subject to alteration. For up-to-date listings see Radio Times

Three to look out for



Alan Davey, the controller of BBC Radio 3, picks out three great moments to tune into this May

Philip Glass's *Akhnaten*

Following its smash-hit 2019 run (a DVD of which is nominated for this year's BBC Music Magazine Opera Award), the Metropolitan Opera is to revive Phelim McDermott's production. Anthony Roth Costanzo plays the revolutionary pharaoh, under the baton of Karen Kamensek.
Opera on 3: 28 May, 6.30pm

Raga and Tala with Anoushka Shankar

Anoushka Shankar guides us through Indian classical music from its roots in Hindu tradition, introducing the traditions of northern Hindustani music, with its emphasis on improvisation, and its more composed southern Carnatic counterpart.
Sunday Series: 8, 15 and 22 May, 11pm

Music of Inner Peace and Outer Turmoil

Daniel Kidane's new work *Be Still*, a reflection on the spring of 2020 during lockdown, will be performed with Medtner's Piano Concerto No. 3, written while the composer sought refuge in rural Warwickshire following the Blitz, and Nielsen's violent Symphony No. 4, composed at the start of World War I.
Radio 3 in Concert: 10 May, 7.30pm

1 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions Osman Yousefzada (fashion designer, multidisciplinary artist)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert (rpt)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
3-4pm Choral Evensong
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.15pm Between the Ears The Racing Mind
7.15-7.30pm New Generation Thinkers
7.30-9pm Drama on 3 Young'uns
9-11pm Record Review Extra
11pm-12am Sunday Series
12-1am Classical Fix
1-6.30am Through the Night

2 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon Concert
4.30-5pm New Generation Artists
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Marlene Dietrich in Five Songs
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

3 TUESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from Bridgewater Hall, Salford. Vaughan Williams *Symphony No. 6*, *A Sea Symphony*. Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha (soprano), Roderick Williams (baritone), Hallé Youth Choir, Hallé Choir, Hallé Orchestra/ Mark Elder
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Marlene Dietrich in Five Songs
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

4 WEDNESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4pm Afternoon Concert
4-5pm Choral Evensong
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the Barbican, London. Dvořák *American Suite*, Walker *Lilacs*, R Schumann *Symphony No. 2*. Nicole Cabell (soprano), London Symphony Orchestra/ Simon Rattle
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay Marlene Dietrich in Five Songs
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

5 THURSDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the Barbican, London. Dvořák *Symphony No. 8*, Janáček *Glagolitic Mass*. City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra/Semyon Bychkov
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay Marlene Dietrich in Five Songs
11-11.30pm Night Tracks
11.30pm-12.30am Unclassified with Elizabeth Alker
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

6 FRIDAY

6.30am-12 noon See Thu 5 May
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from the Royal Festival Hall, London. Birtwistle *Deep Time*, Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde*. Magdálena Kožená (mezzo-soprano), Andrew Staples (tenor), London Philharmonic Orchestra/Edward Gardner
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay Marlene Dietrich in Five Songs
11pm-12.30am Late Junction
12.30-7am Through the Night

7 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9-11.45am Record Review
11.45am-12.30pm Music Matters
12.30-1pm This Classical Life
1-3pm Inside Music
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Music Planet
5-6.30pm J to Z
6.30-10pm Opera on 3 live from the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Puccini *Turandot*. Liudmyla Monastyrska (Turandot), Ermonela Jaho (Liù), Yonghoon Lee (Calàf), Ferruccio Furlanetto (Timur), Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera/ Marco Armiliato
10pm-12 midnight New Music Show
12 midnight-1am Freeness
1-7am Through the Night

8 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions Shirley Hughes (author of Dogger and the Alfie series, who

GETTY

died earlier this year) (rpt)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert (rpt)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
3-4pm Choral Evensong
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature The Primitivism of Primitivism with art critic Alastair Sooke (rpt)
7.30-9pm Drama on 3 (rpt)
9-11pm Record Review Extra
CHOICE 11pm-12am Sunday Series Raga and Tala with Anoushka Shankar
12-1am Classical Fix
1-6.30am Through the Night

9 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon Concert
4.30-5pm New Generation Artists
5-7pm In Tune Vaughan Williams Special featuring works by or inspired by the great British composer
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the European Broadcasting Union
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Poetic Provocations
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

10 TUESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune Vaughan Williams Special
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
CHOICE 7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the Barbican, London. Medtner *Piano Concerto No. 3*, Daniel Kidane *Be Still* (London premiere), Nielsen *Symphony No. 4*. Nikolai Lugansky (piano), BBC Symphony Orchestra/ Jukka-Pekka Saraste (6 May)
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Poetic Provocations
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

11 WEDNESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4pm Afternoon Concert
4-5pm Choral Evensong
5-7pm In Tune Vaughan Williams Special
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Ives *Variations on America*, Bernstein *West Side Story: Symphonic Dances*, Nathaniel Dett *The Ordering of Moses* (UK premiere). Nadine Benjamin (soprano), Chrystal E Williams (mezzo-soprano), Rodrick Dixon (tenor), Eric Greene (baritone), City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus & Orchestra/Joshua Weilerstein
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay Poetic Provocations
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

12 THURSDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune Vaughan Williams Special
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Stravinsky *Concerto for Piano & Wind Instruments*, Strauss *Till Eulenspiegel lustige Streiche*, Elena Langer *Figaro gets a Divorce*, Vaughan Williams *Symphony No. 8*. Steven Osborne (piano), Hallé Orchestra/Mark Elder
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay Poetic Provocations
11-11.30pm Night Tracks
11.30pm-12.30am Unclassified with Elizabeth Alker
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

13 FRIDAY

6.30am-1pm See Thu 12 May
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune Vaughan Williams Special
7-7.45pm In Tune Mixtape
7.45-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from the Barbican, London. The Other Vaughan Williams. Ravel *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, Tristan Murail *Piano Concerto* (UK premiere, BBC co-commission), Franck *Rédemption*, Vaughan Williams *Symphony No. 4*. François-Frédéric Guy (piano), BBC Symphony Orchestra/Ryan Wigglesworth
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay Poetic Provocations
11pm-12.30am Late Junction
12.30-7am Through the Night

14 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9-11.45am Record Review Building a Library: Vaughan Williams's *Symphony No. 4*
11.45am-12.30pm Music Matters
12.30-1pm This Classical Life
1-3pm Inside Music
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Music Planet
5-6.30pm J to Z
6.30-10pm Opera on 3 from the English National Opera. An archive performance from 2006. Vaughan Williams *Sir John in Love*
10pm-12 midnight New Music Show
12 midnight-1am Freeness
1-7am Through the Night

15 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning

A lark with RVW: Jennifer Pike reinvents a favourite

ANNIVERSARY SEASON
Vaughan Williams at 150

This spring, Radio 3 celebrates the legacy of Ralph Vaughan Williams on the great British composer's 150th anniversary. The station will broadcast a complete cycle of Vaughan Williams's nine symphonies, performed by the Hallé and the BBC Philharmonic in Manchester. Plus, on 14 May, *Opera on 3* presents an archive performance of Vaughan Williams's opera *Sir John in Love*, first broadcast from the English National Opera in 2006.

An edition of *Between the Ears*, 'The Lark Descending', will see bird-lover Lucy 'Lapwing' Hodson recording the song of the lark, which will form the melody of a new arrangement of *The Lark Ascending*. Vaughan Williams's famous tune is given contemporary reimaginings by the likes of Elbow frontman and keen birdwatcher Guy Garvey and violinist Jennifer Pike (29 May). And *Composer of the Week* dedicates 24 hours of programming to the great composer, exploring the various facets of his life and music with expert contributors.

ARNO

12 noon-1pm Private Passions Waheed Arian (radiologist, charity founder)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert (rpt)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
3-4pm Choral Evensong
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.15pm Between the Ears Noise
7.15-7.30pm New Generation Thinkers
7.30-9pm Drama on 3 (rpt)
9-11pm Record Review Extra
CHOICE 11pm-12am Sunday Series Raga and Tala with Anoushka Shankar
12-12.30am Classical Fix

16 MONDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon Concert
4.30-5pm New Generation Artists
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the European Broadcasting Union
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

17 TUESDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool. Nielsen *Overture, Pan and Syrinx*, Sibelius *Violin Concerto*, Prokofiev *Symphony No. 5*. Maria Dueñas (violin), Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Domingo Hindoyan
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

18 WEDNESDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4pm Afternoon Concert
4-5pm Choral Evensong
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from the Barbican, London. Brahms *Nänie, Song of the Fates, Schicksalslied*, Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique'*. BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus/Nathalie Stutzmann
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

19 THURSDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from City Halls, Glasgow. Nielsen *Symphony No. 1*, Mozart *Clarinet Concerto*, Nielsen *Symphony No. 4 'Inextinguishable'*. Jörg Widmann (clarinet), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Thomas Dausgaard
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay
11-11.30pm Night Tracks
11.30pm-12.30am Unclassified with Elizabeth Alker
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

20 FRIDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from Milton Court, London. Joanna Marsh *SEEN* (world premiere, BBC commission), Joby Talbot *Path of Miracles*. Glenn Scott (electronics), BBC Singers/Sofi Jeannin
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Late Junction
12.30-7am Through the Night

21 SATURDAY
7-9am Breakfast
9-11.45am Record Review
11.45am-12.30pm Music Matters
12.30-1pm This Classical Life
1-3pm Inside Music
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Music Planet
5-6.30pm J to Z
6.30-10pm Opera on 3 live from the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Donizetti *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Nadine Sierra (Lucia), Javier Camarena (Edgardo), Artur Ruciński (Enrico), Matthew Rose (Raimondo), Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera/ Riccardo Frizza
10pm-12 midnight | New Music Show
12 midnight-1am Freeness
1-7am Through the Night

22 SUNDAY
7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions Kat Arney (science communicator)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert (rpt)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
3-4.30pm Choral Evensong
4.30-5.30pm Jazz Record Requests
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.15pm Between the Ears In the Footsteps of Beryl the Boot
7.15-7.30pm New Generation Thinkers
7.30-9pm Drama on 3 The Hummingbird
9-11pm Record Review Extra
CHOICE 11pm-12am Sunday Series Raga and Tala with Anoushka Shankar
12-1am Classical Fix
1-6.30am Through the Night

23 MONDAY
6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics Five Essential Moments to Vaughan Williams
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Vaughan Williams
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon Concert
4.30-5pm New Generation Artists
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Signs of Life
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

24 TUESDAY
6.30am-1pm See Mon 23 May
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7.30pm In Tune plus Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from Wigmore Hall, London. Handel *Silete venti*, *Concerto Grosso in F*, Vivaldi *Cessate, omai cessate*, Vivaldi *Concerto for 2 violins in A minor, L'estro armónico*, JS Bach *Tilge, Höchster, meine Sünden*. Carolyn Sampson (soprano), Tim Mead (countertenor), Arcangelo/Jonathan Cohen
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay Signs of Life
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

25 WEDNESDAY
6.30am-1pm See Mon 23 May
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4pm Afternoon Concert
4-5pm Choral Evensong
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from City Halls, Glasgow. Bartók *The Wooden Prince*, Nielsen *Symphony No. 2 'The Four Temperaments'*. BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/ Thomas Dausgaard (12 May)
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay Signs of Life
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

26 THURSDAY
6.30am-1pm See Mon 23 May
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from Royal Festival Hall, London. Gabriela Ortiz *Téenek – Invenciones de Territorio*, Dinuk Wijeratne *Tabla Concerto*, Stravinsky *The Rite of Spring*. Sandeep Das (tabla), National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain/Carlos Miguel Prieto
10-10.45pm Free Thinking

10.45-11pm The Essay
Signs of Life
11-11.30pm Night Tracks
11.30pm-12.30am
Unclassified with Elizabeth Alker
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

27 FRIDAY

6.30am-1pm See Mon 23 May for details
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert live from the Barbican, London. Richard Baker *The Price of Curiosity* (world premiere, BBC commission), Rachmaninov *Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini*, Bruckner *Symphony No. 9*. Stephen Hough (piano), BBC Symphony Orchestra/ Alpesh Chauhan
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay
Signs of Life
11pm-12.30am Late Junction
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

28 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9-11.45am Record Review
11.45am-12.30pm Music Matters
12.30-1pm This Classical Life
1-3pm Inside Music
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Music Planet
5-6.30pm J to Z
BBC RADIO 3 **CHOICE 6.30-10pm Opera on 3** live from the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Philip Glass *Akhnaten*. Dísella Lárusdóttir (Queen Tye), Rihab Chaieb (Nefertiti), Anthony Roth Costanzo (Akhnaten), Aaron Blake (High Priest of Amon), Will Liverman (Horemhab), Richard Bernstein (Aye), Zachary James (Amenhotep III), Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera/ Karen Kamensek
10pm-12 midnight New Music Show
12 midnight-1am Freeness
1-7am Through the Night

29 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions
Jarvis Cocker (musician and Pulp frontman)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert (rpt)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
3-4.30pm Choral Evensong
4.30-5.30pm Jazz Record Requests
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.15pm Between the Ears
The Lark Descending with nature expert Lucy Lapwing
7.15-7.30pm New Generation Thinkers
7.30-9pm Drama on 3 Endgame by Samuel Beckett
9-11pm Record Review Extra
11pm-12am Sunday Series
12-1am Classical Fix

30 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Handel. A focus on the composer's relationships with the Hanoverian monarchs, as we head into the bank holiday weekend celebrating Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon Concert
4.30-5pm New Generation Artists
5-7pm In Tune
7-7.30pm In Tune Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

31 TUESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Handel
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-5pm Afternoon Concert
5-7.30pm In Tune plus Mixtape
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert from Kings Place, London. Elias *Meet me in the Green Glen*, Vaughan Williams *The Woodcutter's Song from the opera The Pilgrim's Progress*, Berio *Duet for Two Violins 'Aldo'*, Purcell arr. Williams *Three Songs*, Judith Weir *Good Morning, Midnight!*, Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht*, Mahler arr. Farrington *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. Roderick Williams (baritone), Aurora Orchestra
10-10.45pm Music Matters
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Night Tracks
12.30-6.30am Through the Night

QUIZ ANSWERS from p144

1. The 'Italian'
2. Anton Bruckner
3. *Turandot*
4. The Barbican
5. Frederick II of Prussia ('Frederick the Great')
6. Han-na Chang
7. Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*
8. Four octaves (from E1 to E5)
9. Oscar Peterson
10. They are all based on pieces by JS Bach (*Ave Maria* – Prelude No. 1 from *The Well-Tempered Clavier; Lady Lynda* – *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring; Ski Sunday* – Toccata and Fugue in D minor)

VISIT **WWW.CLASSICAL-MUSIC.COM** FOR THE VERY LATEST FROM THE MUSIC WORLD

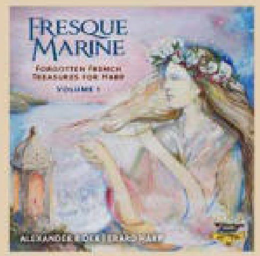
WHR071 Available Now
"Whilst there are toe-tapping dance numbers here, many are often gently engaging, the lyrical melodies benefiting from Heslam's imaginative treatments. The sound world is very much the modern day salon, Heslam and Altshuler firmly take these songs out of the pub and the local, and re-present them in a form suitable for the modern recital. The result is an enchanting disc, full of gentle delights." - Planet Hugill

WHR073 Release Date: 27th May 2022
A fascinating juxtaposition - the seven early toccatas of J.S. Bach are interleaved with the 6th of Peter Seabourne's nine "Steps" cycles, the concept of renowned Bach player, Konstantin Lifschitz. Far from the Romantic toccata style, these canvases are multi-sectional kaleidoscopes of texture and tempi - each a miniature world encompassing virtuosity, intimacy and narrative. In the masterly hands of Lifschitz the result is a monumental journey of extraordinary invention.

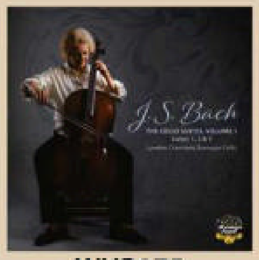
WHR068 Available Now
"...Goldscheider knocks it off [Arnold Concerto] as if he were playing it in his sleep—except that the energy level of his reading clearly indicates that he was wide awake for this session! Lee Reynolds' conducting is equally taut and energetic... he clearly has the drive and sparkle to make this music work.

Seriously, this young man is destined for stardom on his instrument." - The Art Music Lounge

WHR072



WHR074



WHR075

WHR076

COMING SOON

Distributed worldwide by Naxos

Willowhayne Records 2012 10 2022

https://willowhaynerecords.com

THE QUIZ

It's time to put your classical music knowledge to the test...

1. First performed in London on 13 May 1833, Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony is usually known by what nickname?

2. Which composer dedicated his Third Symphony to Wagner, after the two men had enjoyed a few beers together and Wagner had expressed his approval of the work?

3. Which opera was left unfinished by Puccini at his death in 1924 and posthumously completed by Franco Alfano?

4. Incorporating a 1,943-seat concert hall, which British multi-arts venue was officially opened by HM The Queen on 3 March 1982?

5. CPE Bach served as a musician in the court of which flute-playing monarch from 1740-68?

6. The cellist and conductor pictured above resigned as music director of the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra the day after conducting it at its first ever appearance at the BBC Proms on 7 September 2014. Who is she?

7. In which 1874 work are we introduced to two jews – one rich, one poor – called 'Samuel' Goldenberg and 'Schmuÿle'?

8. If tuned in the traditional manner, what is the interval between the lowest string of the double bass and the highest string of the violin?

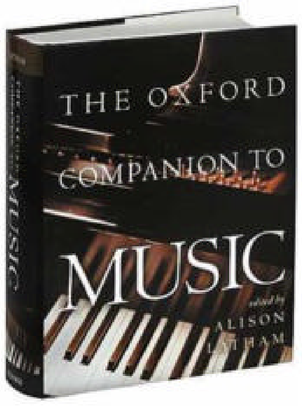
9. In 2014, conductor Andrew Litton paid tribute to a boyhood hero by recording a disc of piano improvisations by which jazz great?

10. What links Gounod's *Ave Maria*, The Beach Boys' *Lady Lynda* and the BBC *Ski Sunday* theme music?

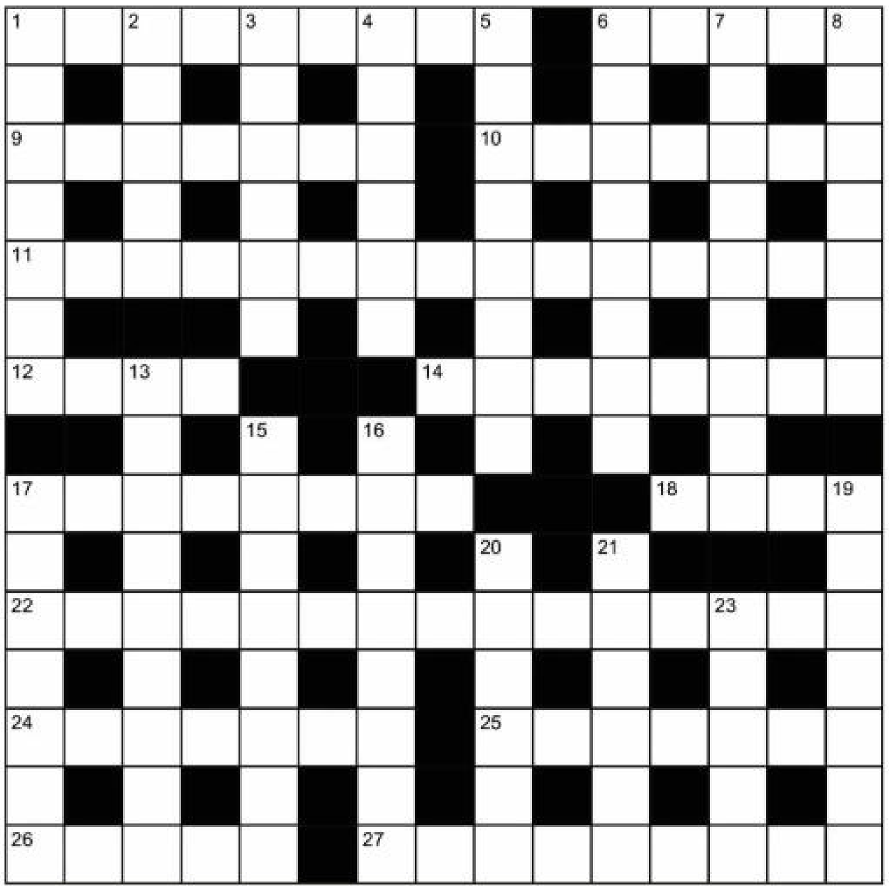
See p143 for answers

The *BBC Music Magazine* PRIZE CROSSWORD NO. 372

Crossword set by **Paul Henderson**



The first correct solution of our crossword picked at random will win a copy of **The Oxford Companion to Music.** A runner-up will win **Who Knew? Answers to Questions about Classical Music** (see oup.co.uk). Send answers to: *BBC Music Magazine*, Crossword 372/May 2022, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA to arrive by 12 May 2022 (solution in Aug 2022 issue).



Your name & address ....

....

....

....

....

ACROSS

1 Ancient instruments: scale hurt when played (9)
6 Different extract of Cortot here (5)
9 Expected last couple of concerts to be keeping to small-scale pieces (7)
10 Difficult times? Arrangement of Sor involved a lot (7)
11 Violinist, say, seizing old lines from actor (9,6)
12 Violin part? Or brass? (4)
14 Viola player, neat, got out of chair (8)
17 Early music group's worry, having recalled dispute linked to Mozart piece? (8)
18 Nobleman's dismissing Schubert piece for stringed instruments (4)
22 I realise andante is out of place in piece by Wolf (7,8)
24 Opening in Italy mostly involves ultimate in Rossini (7)
25 French composer penning sailor's cradle-song (7)
26 Initially gave up rehearsing hostile soprano, retreating, showing indifferent expression (5)
27 Playing strings? With little hesitation, male has split one of them (9)

DOWN

1 English composer is probing extra component (7)
2 American singer getting extra English support (5)
3 See 4 down
4/3 Female performer unexpectedly limits talent (6,6)
5 Female performer disturbed by his growl (8)
6 Former partner's historic reputation drawing in student (3,5)
7 Popular genre you'd expect to sink without trace? (5,4)
8 Keep losing piano book (7)
13 French performer's sound almost swamped by 2? (9)
15 Expecting a carol-singer in one sharp? (8)
16 Dance tunes? Refuse less dancing (8)
17 Some of *Iolanthe*'s cast, excellent, tucking into chips (7)
19 Last two pieces of Debussy containing almost nothing? No good for violinist (7)
20 Countertenor's lines covered by rising oboe? (6)
21 Operatic auctioneer to appear around middle of ballad (6)
23 Violin turning up in *Evita* matinee? (5)

FEBRUARY SOLUTION
No. 369

FEBRUARY WINNER
Robert Harrison, Bristol

Immediate Media Company Limited, publisher of *BBC Music Magazine*, may contact you with details of our products and/or to undertake research. Please write 'Do Not Contact' if you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone. Please write your email address on your postcard if you prefer to receive such information by e-mail.

We abide by IPSO's rules and regulations. To give feedback about our magazines, please email editorialcomplaints@immediate.co.uk, visit immediate.co.uk, or write to the editor at the address above (opposite, top right)

Please note: Because of *BBC Music Magazine*'s limited office access during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, there may be a delay in receiving your prize. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

NEXT MONTH on sale from 12 May (UK)

And the winners are...

The moment has come! Join us as we announce the finest recordings of 2021, as voted by you, and interview the winning performers

Czech mates: the Pavel Haas Quartet plays on our cover CD

GETTY, SHEILA ROCK, MARCO BORGGREVE

On your FREE CD

Czech string quartets
Works by Dvořák and Janáček

Performed by Pavel Haas Quartet

PLUS! The happy and glorious history of the ***British National Anthem*** is explored by *Andrew Green*; *Paul Riley* on how ***Walter Scott***'s novels have been depicted in music; *Charlotte Smith* pays a visit to ***Prussia Cove***; *Claire Jackson* on the best recordings of ***Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto***; and *Jessica Duchen* admires the genius of ***Korngold***

Competition terms and conditions Winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random. All entrants are deemed to have accepted the rules (see opposite) and agreed to be bound by them. The prizes shall be as stated and no cash alternatives will be offered. Competitions are open to UK residents only, except employees of Our Media Company Limited, the promoter and their agents. No purchase necessary. Only one entry per competition per person. Proof of postage is not proof of entry. Our Media Company Limited accepts no responsibility for entries lost or damaged in the post. Entrants agree to take part in any publicity related to these competitions. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Entrants' personal details will not be used by Our Media Company Limited, publisher of *BBC Music Magazine*, for any other purpose than for contacting competition winners.

ourmedia
AN IMMEDIATE GROUP COMPANY

Volume 30 No. 8 *BBC Music Magazine* (ISSN 0966-7180) (USPS 018-168) is published 13 times a year by Our Media Ltd (An Immediate Group Company) under licence from BBC Worldwide, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST, UK.
© Our Media Ltd, 2022

Printed by William Gibbons & Sons Ltd, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 3XT. Not for resale. All rights reserved. Unauthorised reproduction in whole or part is prohibited without written permission. Every effort has been made to secure permission for copyright material. In the event of any material being used inadvertently, or where it proved impossible to trace the copyright owner, acknowledgement will be made in a future issue. MSS, photographs and artwork are accepted on the basis that *BBC Music Magazine* and its agents do not accept liability for loss or damage to same. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher. ISSN 0966-7180. GST Registration No. 898993548RT

Distributed in the US by Circulation Specialists, Inc., 2 Corporate Drive, Suite 945, Shelton CT 06484-6238. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BBC MUSIC, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495.

Our Media Company Ltd is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine can be recycled, for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point.

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Subscriptions and back numbers. Faulty CDs

Online subscriptions

classical-music.com
Subscription prices for one year (13 issues): UK £77.87 Europe/Eire £82.99 US $99 Canada $131.40 Rest of World £84.99

UK, Europe, Rest of World

BBC Music Magazine, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF, UK
Orders/enquiries/back issues
Tel: **03330 162 119**
Tel (Europe): **+44 1604 973 721**
Web: **buysubscriptions.com/contactus**

US/Canada, Online subscriptions

Orders/enquiries/back issues
BBC Music Magazine, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495
Toll-free order line: **1-866-461-4730**
Web: **buysubscriptions.com/contactus**

South Africa

BBC Music Service, Jacklin Enterprises, Private Bag 6, CENTURION, 0046
For sales prices:
Tel (+27) 011 265 4303;
Fax (+27) 011 314 2984;
Web: **buysubscriptions.com/contactus**

abc Jan-Dec 2020 – 25,734

Music that changed me

Julie Fowlis

Folk musician

Julie Fowlis is an award-winning Scottish folk musician who, through her live collaborations and recordings, has championed Gaelic music and poetry and brought together music from many cultures. In 2022, she is artist-in-focus for the Voices Unwrapped season at Kings Place, where on 19 May she performs with piper Brìghde Chaimbeul and fiddler Aidan O'Rourke.

My music is shaped by my upbringing in the Hebrides, where Gaelic radio was always on in our house and I heard Gaelic singing and piping on a daily basis. A great singer called Hugh Matheson lived next door, and as I got older he taught me local songs and the stories behind them. Hugh and my schoolteacher Isa McKillop opened the door to the very old songs, which weren't as celebrated or widely sung, and also to the *bàird baile*, the local poets who wrote about their lived experience. Folksong and story are at the heart of music I create, and I recognise the importance of these songs that have endured, and not just in the Gaelic language either.

When I was a teenager, an album called *Héritage des Celtes* was released. Produced by Dónal Lunny, it was a coming together of the different Celtic regions and a great celebration of different strands of Celtic languages. I love the Breton song 'Maro Eo Ma Mestrez', sung by **YANN-FAÑCH KEMENER.** He was a traditional singer, an ethnomusicologist and folksong collector, who was determined to keep the Breton tradition alive. Every time I hear his voice, it stops me in my tracks.

I had always sung and played the pipes, but I came to classical music later. I started the oboe at 14 and when I went to university to study music, I didn't have confidence in my playing. For my final performance, I played **ALBINONI**'s Oboe Concerto Op. 9, No. 2, and there was a moment when I thought 'I'm actually doing this'. There's a beautiful opening phrase at the start of the slow movement which goes on for maybe 25 seconds, and I spent hours in practice rooms just trying to control the breath and keep that purity of tone. As a singer and as a piper, I'm aware of the importance of breath control and flow.

Just before lockdown, my daughters, then aged ten and seven, had their first live orchestral experience through the Nicola Benedetti Sessions. They prepared the violin parts of **BARTÓK**'s *Romanian Folk Dances*. I've always loved these pieces and I thought of them in a new way watching my girls learn them. Coming from a family that had played traditional music all their lives, they understood the form really well. They didn't separate music into boxes like 'classical' or 'folk'.

Bartók was a tireless folksong collector, which reminds me of my time as artist-in-residence with Tobar an Dualchais, an organisation responsible for digitising and cataloguing major recorded archives in Scotland. I had been taught a song by Catriona Garbutt, 'Am Bròn Binn' (The Sweet Sorrow), which is a Fenian (or Ossianic) lay from early Irish literature. It has simple melodies led by the rhythm of the words, like chant – it is stunning, but it takes work to learn it properly by ear. In the archive I was delighted to find a 1965 field recording of it sung by **CATRIONA MACCORMICK**, the woman who had passed it on to Catriona Garbutt.

As a young Gaelic singer and piper, in the early 2000s I was excited by the work of **MARTYN BENNETT**, a great Scottish musician with classical training whose mother is a Gaelic singer. I loved the way he married all the parts of his life in his music – dance and electronic music, string arrangements, piping and traditional voices. He died at 33 and on his last album *Grit*, recorded when he was too ill to play himself, he brought together folk musicians and tradition-bearers he admired. 'Blackbird' features the voice of Lizzie Higgins (1929-93) daughter of Jeanie Robertson, a celebrated folk singer from a settled travelling family. I learnt from Martyn that if you stay true to the songs and allow them to be what they are, you can blur the edges of musical boundaries without compromise and reach out to other cultures and styles.

Interview by Amanda Holloway

GETTY

The choices

Maro Eo Ma Mestrez
Héritage des Celtes *Columbia 477763 2*

Albinoni
Oboe Concerto in D minor Op. 9, No. 2
Heinz Holliger (oboe); I Musici
Decca 456 3332

Bartók Romanian Folk Dances
Benedetti Foundation Orchestra
Benedetti Foundation 4850599

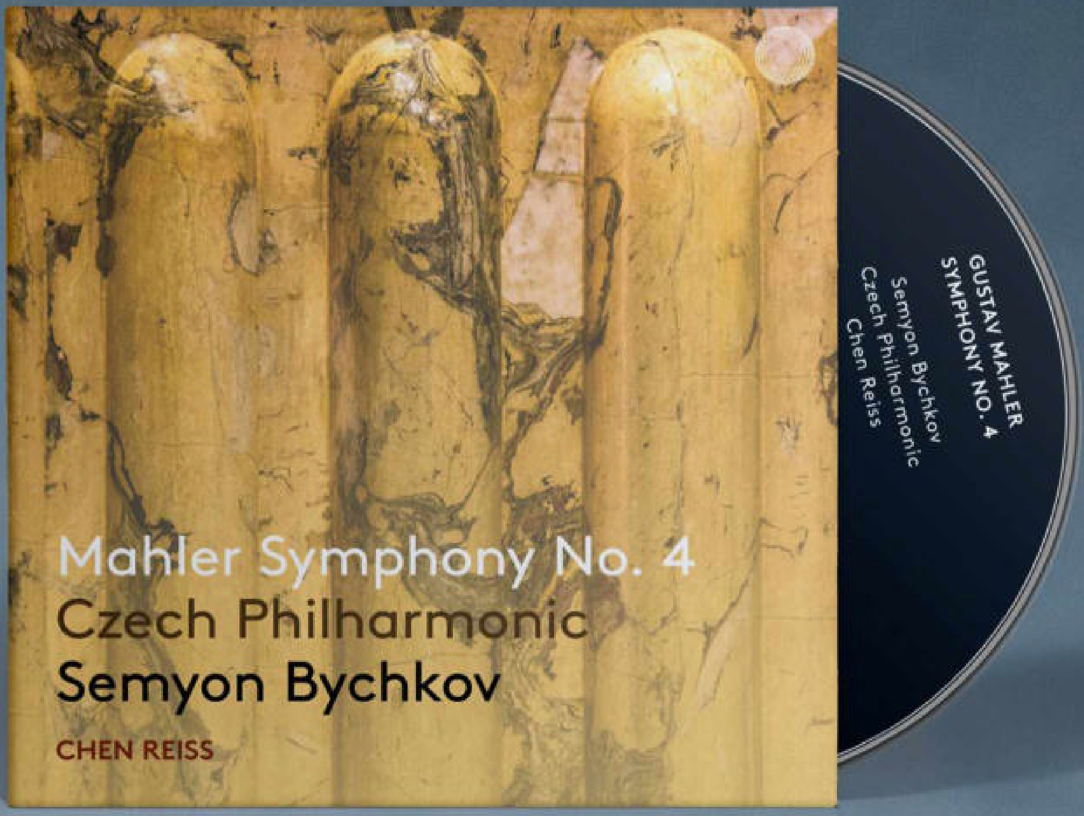
Am Bròn Binn
Catriona MacCormick
tobarandualchais.co.uk (track ID: 106105)

Grit
Martyn Bennett
Real World Records

ORCHID CLASSICS
OUT NOW
Jae-Hyuck Cho plays Chopin
Jae-Hyuck Cho plays Chopin's extraordinary four Ballades and Sonata No.3 in recordings that stand out for their nuance, passion, and virtuosity.
ORC100193
Available on all platforms and at www.orchidclassics.com
BALLADES
Jae-Hyuck Cho
plays Chopin
ORCHID CLASSICS

PENTATONE

Mahler Returns to His Native Soil



PTC 5186 972

The **Czech Philharmonic** and its Chief Conductor and Music Director **Semyon Bychkov** present a new recording of Mahler's Fourth Symphony, laying the foundation of a complete Mahler symphonies cycle to appear on PENTATONE. This cycle deliberately starts with the most popular and frequently-played Fourth, famous for its macabre scherzo, soothing slow movement and heavenly finale, sung by soprano **Chen Reiss**.

Yoga-inspired Programme for Basset Clarinet and Orchestra

PTC 5186 973

On her second PENTATONE album ***FLOW***, **Annelien Van Wauwe** presents a programme inspired by her love for yoga, combining Mozart's famous Clarinet Concerto with the world premiere recording of Wim Henderickx's concerto ***SUTRA***. Van Wauwe performs both works on the characteristic basset clarinet, together with the renowned **NDR Radiophilharmonie** under the baton of **Andrew Manze**.

iTunes MUSIC qobuz amazon Europadisc TIDAL PRESTO CLASSICAL DEEZER Spotify

www.pentatonemusic.com

Distributed in the UK by RSK